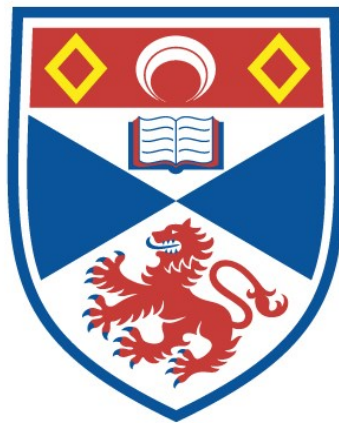


THE SPANISH MONARCHY, 1475-1492: CRISIS OF POLICY IN THE YEARS LEADING UP TO THE FIRST COLUMBIAN EXPEDITION

Stephen Haliczer

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THE SPANISH MONARCHY 1475-1492: CRISIS OF POLICY
IN THE YEARS LEADING UP TO THE FIRST COLUMBIAN
EXPEDITION

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I, Stephen H. Haliczer declare that this thesis has been composed from original and secondary sources worked on by myself and is entirely my own composition. It has never been accepted in any previous application for a higher degree. I was admitted to do research at St. Andrews in October 1964 and, after spending one year in residence there, worked in Spanish archives for a further two years. From October 1967 I have been engaged in composing the thesis.

.....

31 May, 1968.

Stephen H. Haliczer was admitted as a Research Student under Ordinance General No. 12 in October 1964, and enrolled as a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in June 1965. He undertook research on the Spanish Monarchy from 1475 to 1492.

.....

Dean of the Faculty of Arts

31 May, 1968.

I certify that Stephen H. Haliczzer has fulfilled the conditions
and regulations of the Ordinances governing his ^{COURSE}~~course~~ as a Research
Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

.....
Supervisor

31 May, 1968.

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INTRODUCTION

Any historian interested in doing research on the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella must begin by orienting himself in the customary way - that is to say by reading the most important general works on the period in order to find out the prevailing view of modern historians. The first thing that should strike him, after he has gone through a large number of these works, is their relative sameness over time. There seems to be little evolution of views about not only the chief personalities of the period but also about the causes of its major historical events.

Modern historians, from Diego Clemencín in his classic Elogio a la Reina Doña Isabel la Católica published in 1821 to Tarsicio Azcona in his recent Isabel la Católica (1964), have organized their works around the same major themes. Firstly, they have all made great efforts to show the contrast between the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella and that of their predecessor Henry IV.¹

This difference came about, firstly, because of the outstanding character of Isabel herself, at once merciful and just,² and then because of several important measures taken to enforce royal authority and reduce the power of the nobility. In order to accomplish these things a rural police force was set up on a national basis. Supported mainly by contributions from the towns, the Santa Hermandad was

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1. See Clemencín's chapter entitled: "On the State of Anarchy Prevailing in Castile" for a typical example.
 2. Diego Clemencín, Elogio a la Reina Dona Isabel la Católica, (Madrid, 1821), pp. 194-219.

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organised to combat the anarchy into which much of the countryside had been allowed to fall during the previous reign. Owing to the development of this institution "the scandals that were previously so frequent never repeated themselves".¹

A few years after the formation of the Santa Hermandad the nobility were hit a severe blow by the great reduction in mercedes effected after the Cortes of Toledo (1480). A chapter describing this reduction became an essential part of all general studies of the reign after Diego Clemencin's discovery of a copy of the "Libro de las Declaratorias" in the archive of Simancas. This document lists the names of individuals, ranging from the greatest nobles in Castile to humble merchants, along with the reductions ordered made in their total of mercedes.² So effective was this measure and others, that the once powerful nobility were stripped of their independence and reduced to mere "clients" of the state.³

The drive toward absolutism discerned in the policy of Ferdinand and Isabella by Jean Mariejal and other historians found its next obstacle in the runaway autonomy of the towns and in the continued existence of unassimilated social groups - the Jews and Moors. The former problem was solved by sending a royal official - the corregidor - to preside over municipal councils.⁴ Forced conversion of the Moors and the outright

1. Ibid., p. 140.

2. Ibid., p. 142.

3. Jean H. Mariejal, L'Espagne sous Ferdinand et Isabelle, (Paris, 1892), p. 34.

4. Jean H. Mariejal, L'Espagne sous Ferdinand et Isabelle, (Paris, 1892), p. 25.

4

expulsion of the Jews illustrated the new absolutist idea that the existence of populations refusing to accept the religious position laid down for them by the state was not to be tolerated. These harsh measures were necessary to the new Spanish national state in the same way as the expulsion of "plus de trois cent mille protestants" was to the France of Louis XIV.¹

These views about the reign are not peculiar to the authors whose works have been mentioned here; they are held to a greater or lesser degree by almost all other modern historians dealing with the period. Despite the slow growth, in recent years, of a valuable body of specialized work dealing with local history, crown finances, economic history, the problem of the conversos, and the nobility² no attempt has yet been made to re-formulate and rewrite our present view of the reign. There is no doubt that a major reason for the lack of a modern synthesis is to be found in the relatively small body of specialized work that has been published on major problems of the period. However, this is not the only reason nor the most important one. The major obstacle is the willingness of modern historians to adhere to the "official" version of the reign's history as written by the court chronicler Fernando del Pulgar and propagated by other officials close to royal government like the

1. Ibid., p. 38.

2. The recently published study of Jerez de la Frontera by H. Sancho de Sopranis, as well as works published by Serrano on the city of Burgos and Ruano on Toledo can be recommended for local history while Suarez-Fernandez's brief study Nobleza y Monarquia is a helpful guide to the political role of the fifteenth century Spanish nobility.

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Bachiller Bernaldez, and Mosen Diego de Valera. Such departures from the accepted formula as Prescott's conception of the rule of the two monarchs as having been one of "opinion not force" can be ascribed more to an unwarranted injection of the author's own preconceptions than to any original research or re-thinking of the events of the period.¹

Of all the chronicles the Crónica de los Reyes Catolicos by Fernando del Pulgar is not only the most famous but has been the most influential in forming the opinions of later historians. Pulgar, like his contemporary Mosen Diego de Valera, had long been familiar with the court, having begun his career in government service during the reign of Juan II. From this experience, and a deep study of the men around him he later composed his classic Claros Varones de Castilla.²

In the following reign he became secretary to Henry IV and was entrusted with some highly important diplomatic missions. Several of these are well known, including one to the papal court in 1473, in which he tried to further Henry's plan to marry his daughter Juana to Prince Henry (Fortuna) of Aragon, son of the deceased Prince of Viana. This embassy was complained of by Ferdinand himself in a letter to his father Juan II of Aragon:

The King sent Fernando del Pulgar as his representative at the Roman Court in order to obtain the dispensation for the marriage of the son of the Prince with the daughter of the Queen and other things in disservice of your highness. 3

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1. W. Prescott, History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic, (New York, 1838, p. 719.
 2. Fernando del Pulgar, Claros Varones de Castilla ed. J. Dominguez Bordona, (Madrid, 1942), *passim*.
 3. Fernando del Pulgar, Crónica de los Reyes Catolicos, ed. Juan de Mata Carriazo, (Madrid, 1943), introd. p. xxxiv. "El Rey envia por procurador en corte romana a Fernando del Pulgar, por procurar la dispensación del fiijo del Infante con la fija de la Reina y otras cosas en dano e deservicio de vuestra senorita."

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That Pulgar was frequently sent on important missions to France is attested by the chronicler Alonso de Palencia who, referring to an embassy entrusted to him by Ferdinand and Isabella, comments:

They sent Fernando del Pulgar as ambassador, known to the French monarch as a wise and prudent person and ingenious in conversation and very suitable in order that the vulgar not penetrate the cause of his secret embassy, because he had been picked by D. Henry as his messenger on previous occasions. ¹

Despite the fact that he had worked against the interests of the new sovereigns and was an avowed enemy of some of their most important early supporters, (notably the Archbishop of Toledo),² Pulgar was immediately taken on as secretary in the new court. Only a few weeks after the death of Henry in December 1474 he was sent on an embassy to France and referred to by Isabel as: "our secretary and of our council".³

From October 1477 to the beginning of 1482 Pulgar was not present at court. Whether his withdrawal had been motivated by his letter to Cardinal Mendoza "on the execution that they are making in the conversos of Andalusia" in which he attacked the procedures of the Inquisition or for other reasons, he was effectively removed from official business until 1482, when he was assigned the post of chronicler.⁴

Long service at court, and a deep knowledge of its personalities,

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1. Alonso de Palencia, Crónica de Enrique IV, trans. A. Paz y Melia, IV (Madrid, 1908, p.68). "Enviaron por embajador a Fernando del Pulgar, conocido del monarca frances por haberle elegido en otro tiempo D.Enrique por su mensajero, como a persona perita, sagaz e ingeniosa in la conversacion, y muy a proposito para que el vulgo no trasluciese la causa de su secreta embajada."
 2. Pulgar, Claros Varones, op. cit., p.38.
 3. Pulgar, Crónica, op. cit., introd. p.xxxv.
 4. Ibid., introd. p.xlii.

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as well as his official post, should have placed Pulgar in an ideal position to write a deeply revealing account of the events of 1454-1492, like that of Alonso de Palencia. However, Pulgar's methods and his conception of historiography should give pause to all those modern historians who seem so willing to base their works on his chronicle. In a letter to the Count of Cabra (Madrid, 20 February 1484), he cheerfully offered to list the Count, if he so desired, on the winning side of a council vote on whether to hold or release the rey Chico of Granada, Boabdil, despite the fact that the Count had not been present in the council.¹

Furthermore, it appears from this same letter that Pulgar's chief interest in writing the chronicle was more literary than historical. He explains that he will do his best not to write in the style of the old chroniclers but instead, to try and follow classical models:

I work as much as I can to imitate, if possible, Livy and the other ancient historians, who beautify their chronicles with the discourses that we read in them involved in much philosophy and good doctrine. And in these discourses we have freedom to add, adorning them with the best and most effective words and reasonings that we can, taking care that we do not leave the substance of the fact. 2

Unfortunately, despite his disclaimer, Pulgar can be accused of a large number of deliberate misrepresentations undertaken for a variety of reasons. Some were done to please a noble friend or patron like the Count of Cabra or Cardinal Mendoza, others to obscure certain events in which Pulgar himself took an important part which now might embarrass

1. Ibid., introd. p.lxv.

2. Pulgar, Crónica, op. cit., introd. p.lxv.

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him to recall too exactly. One such situation was his embassy to the Roman court. When he comes to deal with the proposed marriage between Henry and Juana he does not even mention his embassy and censures Prince Henry for going against the wishes of his uncle Juan II. Even the year of the proposed marriage is changed from 1473 to 1474.¹

More important than these misrepresentations, however, are those following directly from his overall interpretation of the reign. Acceptance of this "official interpretation by modern historians has led them either to ignore other possible documentary sources that might cast doubt on Pulgar's statements or, when faced with new evidence, to attempt to torture it to fit his conclusions.

Pulgar's account of the period before and during the civil war (1475-1479) reveals him as an absolutist coming out firmly against any revolt against royal authority no matter what its motivation.² Furthermore, as a loyal servant of the new monarchs he was compelled to turn on his former master Henry IV and show not only the weakness of his government and character but also the illegitimacy of Juana and, consequently, the right of Isabel to succeed to the throne as the legitimate daughter of Juan II.³

Wishing to demonstrate the difference between the characters of Isabel and Henry he makes her appear obedient,⁴ pacific,⁵ a lover of

1. Ibid., introd. p. xxxiv.

2. Pulgar, Crónica, op. cit., introd. p. xxxiv.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 41.

5. Ibid., p. 48.

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justice,¹ religious,² firm in obtaining what she felt would benefit the monarchy,³ and, above all, jealous of the royal patrimony:

The truth is that in our times we saw her give very few gifts of vassals; she closely guarded the royal patrimony. 4

Naturally, a Queen of such sterling character could never engage in the undignified bribery practised by Henry IV in order to keep friends and placate enemies. Nor could the history of such a glorious reign, so "different" from its predecessor, be written as the story of sordid political deals. Thus, when Pulgar treats agreements made with the nobility covering the rendering of important fortresses to the crown, such as that made with Admiral Enríquez for Simancas, or the return of the rebel Estuñiga family to the loyalist side during the civil war, he produces highly fictionalized accounts which obscure the real nature of the bargain.

Certainly common sense should warn us against accepting Pulgar's description of the surrender of the fortresses of Simancas and Rioseco by Ferdinand's powerful uncle Admiral Enrique Enríquez. According to Pulgar, in 1481, the Admiral's eldest son D. Fadrique became involved in a quarrel with Ramir Nunes de Gusman Senor de Toral over "el asentamiento cerca de las damas" at a fiesta in the Queen's palace. The Queen, after first ordering the arrest of both parties, freed Ramir Nunes, granting

1. Ibid., pp. 43,67,77.

2. Ibid., p. 77.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 74.

him a royal security against the vengeance of Fadrique.¹ Despite this, a few days later, Ramir Nunes was attacked by three of Fadrique's servants in the main square of Valladolid. The Queen, hearing of this assault, mounted her horse and took the road to Simancas. Arriving at the gates to the fortress, she demanded that the Admiral surrender his son because he had broken the royal security:

The Admiral replied: your highness I neither have him nor know where he is.

The Queen replied:

If you cannot surrender your son; give me this fortress of Simancas. 2

Pulgar then records that the Admiral complied with Isabel's wish with the greatest good will and also agreed to hand over the fortress of Rioseco. His troops were withdrawn from the two places immediately and his castellan was replaced with one loyal to the crown.³

This highly romantic, beautifully written account is also completely erroneous in all of its particulars. The Admiral was far too powerful a magnate to be treated in this way just after the conclusion of a civil war in which he had been one of the key supporters of Ferdinand and Isabella. If the crown desired his expulsion from two modern, strategic fortresses it would have to find a more politic way of accomplishing this than a summary order to evacuate.

A recent examination of certain documents in the section called

1. Pulgar, Crónica, op. cit., p.441.

2. Pulgar, Crónica, op. cit., p.442.

3. Ibid., p.442.

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Mercedes y Privilegios in the archive of Simancas¹ shows that the deal made with the Admiral that eventually brought the two fortresses into the royal patrimony carried with it a financial settlement with him amounting to 300,000 maravedís in juro de heredad (income in perpetuity), and 900,000 in juro al quitar. Furthermore, the Admiral flatly refused to allow the crown to take possession of the fortresses until all the monies owing to him had been paid in full.² The crown finally took possession of the two places in 1490, after paying the Admiral's heirs very much more than had been originally agreed.³

The fact that Pulgar, in his account of the year 1481, could pretend that Ferdinand and Isabella were in a position to treat Admiral Enríques in such an arbitrary way reveals another grave defect in the "official" history: it completely lacks any conception of development in the power of the monarchy versus the other major political forces in Castile. Acceptance of this point of view by modern historians has tended to reduce their interest in finding out exactly how Ferdinand and Isabella were able to develop the power of the monarchy and just how far this development went. If we accept uncritically the "official" history of the reign we must assert, with the noted mediaevalist Juan Torres Fontes that:

The State stopped being a many-headed government and remained in the hands of monarchs disposed to avoid interior disintegration with a government at once centralizing, unique,

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1. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, legajo 56, folio E3.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, legajo 56, folio E3.
 3. Ibid.

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steady, and stable. The endurance of the monarchy made the particular interests of the few disappear - the noble and ecclesiastical minorities who were benefiting at the cost of the entire people. 1

Not only did the reign witness the "vindication of the rights of the crown" but a long step was taken toward government in the interests of the many, a concept that had virtually "disappeared among the Castilian people during previous reigns".²

In order to revise this traditional view of the reign it is first necessary to utilize large quantities of unpublished sources that could shed light on such questions as the relationship of the nobles and the urban patriciate to the crown, royal finances, the war in Granada and the effects of the Inquisition. Although much material of this type is available it is neither readily accessible nor easy to interpret. Furthermore, even where a valuable series of documents is available it is seldom complete, with gaps frequently occurring in the most vital years of the reign. Another major difficulty for the researcher is the amount of time he can devote to working in any one archive. Most municipal archives are only open in the mornings for about five hours (frequently less) while during the winter months even the great Archive of Simancas reduces its hours sharply. This, of course, places great strain on the usually limited timetable of a researcher.

During the course of my work, I visited the following cities in search of documents on the relations between the cities and the crown:

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1. Juan Torres Fontes, Pedro Fajardo Alelentado del Reino de Murcia (Madrid, 1953), p.15.
 2. Juan Torres Fontes, Pedro Fajardo Alelentado del Reino de Murcia (Madrid, 1953), p.7.

Burgos, Valladolid, Seville, Cadiz, Cordoba, Jerez de la Frontera and Murcia. In Burgos the Archive of the Ayuntamiento contains an important series of Actas Capitulates (minutes of city council meetings) for the years 1476, 1478, 1480, 1481, 1483, 1484, 1485, 1486, 1487 and 1488. Of course the difficulty here is that there are important gaps in this material including the 1490's. Furthermore, the books themselves are written in a very abbreviated form relating neither the text of royal letters sent to the city nor the complete replies of the regidores. The fault of royal letters is to some extent compensated for by the documents contained in the Cartelero Real, a series of unindexed files containing many royal letters from the 1490's. In Valladolid the Actas Capitulares begin in 1500 while the series of letters preserved there contains little of importance. The situation in Seville is much the same with the city's Actas beginning in 1500 while its series of letters are mainly copies of letters sent to all Andalusian cities at the same time. In Cadiz it was said that all records were lost when Drake attacked the city. The municipal Archives of Cordoba contain a much damaged, much abbreviated series of Actas Capitulares that contained little of interest.

Jerez de la Frontera, from which a good deal of the most useful information in this study comes, proved to have what must be one of the most valuable groups of Actas Capitulares in Spain as well as containing, in its notarial archives, the last remaining book of fifteenth century notarial records in lower Andalusia. Unfortunately, the series of Actas Capitulares is incomplete containing gaps between 1472 and 1478 and 1480-1481. For the year 1488 only July has been preserved. However,

to compensate for these gaps the minutes themselves have been taken down in the most detailed possible manner which accounts for the fact that each of them is more than four times larger than the comparable book in any other town. The full texts of all royal letters received by the city have been preserved and copied along with the replies and arguments of the regidores. When properly understood these records provide a fascinating insight into the relationship between the crown and one of Castile's most important cities. In its notarial archive Jerez is fortunate in preserving the only remaining book of notarial records for fifteenth century lower Andalusia. The book which contains records from 7 February 1483 to 11 December 1484 sheds much light on the Italian commercial presence in this area during the late fifteenth century.

Murcia was also important for this study. The books of Actas Capitulares preserved in its Archivo Municipal are far less detailed than those of Jerez but nonetheless contain valuable information covering the years 1482, 1485, 1486, 1487 and 1490. Perhaps even more useful than the Actas themselves are the two books of Cartas Reales covering 1478 to 1494. Many of the letter copied into these books can be seen nowhere else. Toledo, which might have been highly important, contains only a Cartelario whose documents have already been published by Ruano.

Two large national archives were also consulted for this work. The first and most important of these was the great Archivo General de Simancas where more than a year was spent working on all aspects of the period. The sections consulted were: Diversos de Castilla, which contains much information about the reform of mercedes, Estado Castilla,

the Registro General del Sello consisting of letters issued by the crown or the council touching on relations with the nobility and the towns, the war in Granada and many other matters, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, for the income of the crown from its "ordinary" accounts, Escribania Mayor de Cuentas for crown income and expenditure from its "extraordinary" accounts, Mercedes y Privilegios for grants of juros by the crown from the beginning of the reign of Henry IV to 1504, and Patronato Real and Libros de copias useful for crown relations with the nobility.

Documents on the nobility found in Simancas were supplimented by the fondo Osuña contained in the Archivo Historico Nacional. This collection of documents, which unites the archives of many of the most important noble families of Castile, proved disappointing for the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella.

These unpublished documents provide the basis for a re-assessment of the traditional view of the reign and indicate ways in which its internal affairs may be better understood.

Spanish politics for most of the fifteenth century can be said to have been a game played by the great noble families which had as its object the gradual weakening of crown authority and the gaining of economic power for themselves. By the mid-fifteenth century, with their control of the great sheep routes and with most of Castile's land in their possession the great nobles were well on the way toward gaining the second of these goals. With the failure of Henry IV's campaign against the Kingdom of Granada they began to think about achieving the first.

The series of civil wars that began in 1463 raised the political

power of the great nobles to its greatest level due to the weakening of royal power that had to be agreed to by both Henry and Isabella. Henry's agreement to declare Isabella his heir and Isabella's promise of co-government to her chief supporter Alonso Carillo seemed to set the seal on the nobles' victory. However, the untimely death of Juan Pacheco leader of the main nobles coalition and the exile of Alonso Carillo leader of the second robbed them of their victory. Henceforth no single noble or combination of nobles was allowed to assume co-governing power.

During the civil war that followed the accession of Ferdinand and Isabella the nobles gave further proof of their unreliability. The pro-Portuguese attitude of many of the great Andalusian nobles, the open hostility of the Estuñiga family and the ambiguous attitude of Pedro de Velasco during the siege of Burgos castle warned Ferdinand and Isabella of the necessity of looking for a new base of support.

They found this support in the towns which, during the reign of Henry had given such significant proof of their loyalty to the crown. In 1476 the monarchs organized the Santa Hermandad to capitalize on this urban support and, with its help, began to change its policies toward the great nobles. Wartime grants were reduced and the lenient amnesties that had been allowed rebels like Pedro de Estuniga or Juan Pacheco were violated or reduced.

With the treaty that ended the second war of the Marquisate of Villena the period of open hostility between the nobles and the monarchy came to a close and was replaced by various, more subtle measures employed to make the crown the arbitrator of the nobles' affairs. The

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monarchy made it a practice to intervene in inter-familial disputes, marriage contracts and castle building. During the late 1480's and early 1490's the major nobles became so involved in the capture and defence of the kingdom of Granada that their potential for making trouble in Castile was sharply reduced as a consequence.

Meanwhile the nascent alliance with the towns and the oligarchies that controlled them was developing rapidly. This occurred especially after the beginning of the war in Granada when troops and supplies sent by the towns, with the approval of their governing class, were so important to the Castilian armies. In return for their support of war taxation the urban patriciate was sustained in its power by the crown despite complaints of abuses that came in from every quarter.

However, there was a political price to be paid on a local level for the support of these new allies, in the pressure that they put on the powers of the corregidor and his assistants and on other national officials within the towns.

The growing local power of the urban patriciate was a grave threat to the survival of Castile's Jewish communities. This occurred because of the peculiar makeup of the Castilian urban patriciate which was heavily interpenetrated with converso elements. This class of conversos (converted Jews) had grown up after the forced conversions of 1391. Thereafter large numbers of Jews converted to Christianity and, using their skills as tax-farmers, merchants and tradesmen, rose rapidly into the ranks of the Christian urban patriciate. As they did this their interests and those of the remaining Jews began to diverge and soon a

group of intellectual converso anti-semites began to develop.

During the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella this strain of intellectual anti-semitism converged with the hostility felt by the urban patriciate toward any power or social group within the town that was not under their direct control. The Jews had always lived under their own law and were considered as direct vassals of the crown. The same period that saw pressure being put on the corregidor and his officials also saw the beginning of attempts to make the continued existence of Jewish communities impossible in Spain. By the early 1490's the town council's successful attempts to place a double tax burden on the Jews and at the same time reduce their capacity to pay had so reduced their usefulness that the crown deemed it expedient to expell them.

The ineffectiveness of the crown's efforts to help the Jews evade the pressure of the urban patriciate was not the only sign of crown weakness during the latter part of the war. The "ordinary" income accounts which had shown healthy surpluses as late as 1488 were in deficit by 1491. The Crusade and the Hermandad subsidy which were the two most important extraordinary income accounts were also in difficulties and the crown could expect an interruption in both of them.

The high cost of maintaining Castilian presence in the Kingdom of Granada, patrolling its coasts and repairing its fortresses put an additional strain on the crown's resources.

The nobles were also a cause for anxiety in the last years of the Granada conflict. A serious rebellion in Vizcaya was only halted at the

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cost of humiliating concessions while in Andalusia a major outbreak of private war was feared.

As one of the ways of resolving this political and financial crisis the crown, with the concurrence of its most important advisors, decided to re-commence a policy of overseas exploration and trade. The African route to the East had been closed to it by the treaty of Alcacovas so that the only route left open was toward the west - as prescribed by Cristopher Columbus. The crown's initiative bore rapid fruit as by the late 1490's the island of Hispanola was already yielding respectable amounts of gold to the treasury. In the sixteenth century, of course, this trickle of gold increased to a torrent with the most profound effects on Spain's political position in Europe and on the European economy as a whole.

CURRENCY

The most important coins for the period 1475-1497 (when a major monetary reform took place) were the silver real, the gold castellano, the ducat and the Barcelona or Valencia pound. The maravedí was the money of account in which the value of all Castilian coins was expressed.

Inflation which had been very severe for the reign of Henry IV was slowed considerably during that of the Catholic Kings. The real had risen from 16 maravedís in 1462 to 30 in 1474¹ but between 1475 and 1497 it depreciated only another four maravedís.² The castellano also experienced a slight rise during the reign but held steady at 485 maravedís from 1487 to at least 1489.³

Further evidence for the stability of the currency comes from the lack of variation in the amount of specie in the silver real. Neither its fineness nor its weight altered during the period and it remained at the equivalent of 80.131 between 1475 and 1497.⁴ The metallic content of the Barcelona pound also remained constant during the period.⁵ The ducat was worth the equivalent of 9s.8d. and equalled some 375 maravedís making the maravedí worth the equivalent of .24d.⁶

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1. Liciniano Saez, Demostracion histórica del verdadero valor de todas las monedas que corrian en Castilla durante el reynado del Senor Don Enrique IV. (Madrid, 1805), p.175.
 2. A.P. Usher, The Early History of Deposit Banking in Europe. (Cambridge, Mass. 1943), p.514.
 3. Saez, op. cit., p.424.
 4. Usher, op. cit., p.512.
 5. Ibid., p.510.
 6. J.R. Highfield, "The Catholic Kings and the Nobility of Castile" in Europe in the Late Middle Ages, ed. J.R. Hale (London, 1965), p.362.

CHAPTER I

THE REIGN OF HENRY IV, 1454-1474: REVOLUTION OF THE UPPER NOBILITY AND THE WARS OF THE PRINCES

The history of the reign of Henry IV was mainly determined by the actions of the upper nobility. It presents a picture of ever-shifting alliances among the great families, intrigues, and agreements quickly made and readily broken that is not only confusing but seems illogical and even absurd. However, this situation can be readily understood once we grasp the fact that the social class we are dealing with here had no effective opposition from either king or commons throughout the reign. Their political dominance being secure they could afford to be capricious and fight among themselves for minor advantages without fear of being displaced. They were essential to the administration of the country and their acquiescence was necessary to the keeping of the peace. Shortly after the accession of Henry IV (1454) they had begun to think of replacing the monarchy with a new system of government more adapted to the reality of their almost absolute power. They had become revolutionaries and their successful revolution was to carry Ferdinand and Isabella to the throne.

In most cases, the importance of the families that were to play such an important part in the political life of the late fifteenth century dates only from the beginning of the Trastámara dynasty at the accession of Henry II in 1368.¹ By the latter part of the fifteenth century these rising families had managed to engross most of the land

1. Tarsicio de Azcona, Isabel la Católica, (Madrid, 1964), p.71.

in the royal patrimony. Eloquent testimony to what remained of the royal estate in the provinces of Leon, Valladolid, Zamora and Palencia comes from the complaints of the judge of confiscated Jewish property in these provinces in the months following the expulsion. On learning that the nobles were to be allowed to have this property if it fell within their señorios he asked if this permission had been given to all noble families in the provinces because:

in these archbishoprics all the land is owned by nobles and all that remains of the royal domain is Leon, Sahagund and Ponferrada. 1

The chief property-holding families in the north were the Velasco whose lands were located in the modern provinces of Burgos, Logrono, and Santander, and the Counts of Trevino and Salvatierra. In Galicia, domination was shared by the Alvarez de Sotomayor Counts of Camina, the Trastamara, and the Archbishop of Santiago and the bishops of Tuy and Vigo. In Valladolid, the Enriquez family, hereditary Admirals of Castile, virtually controlled the entire province. In Soria and Guadalajara the principal families were the Hurtado de Mendoza and the Counts of Medinaceli. In Extremadura the Estuniga, Puertocarrero and Suarez de Figueroa whose holdings included Zafra, Feria and Villalba shared control with the commanders of the military Orders. In Andalusia, the entire Castilian side of the frontier was held by the Guzman, Ponce de Leon and the Dukes Alburquerque and Alba "so that in these seventy leagues only Antequera and Alcala remain to the crown".²

1. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla 8-98 in Azcona, p.72.

2. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla 8-111 in Azcona, p.73.

In effect, by the late fifteenth century, so much land had gone from the royal estate to the nobility that some 2 per cent of the population owned 97 per cent of the land in Castile. Of that total some 50 per cent was held by the eight or nine families comprising the upper nobility. Control of the military Orders of Santiago, Calatrava, and Alcantara was also shared out among a few of the above families. Mastership of the Orders put them in a perfect position to profit by the fastest growing and most lucrative industry in Castile - sheep raising - because almost all the major sheep routes passed through the lands owned by the Orders, where tolls were collected at special stations.¹ The Orders were also immensely valuable in other ways; not only did they yield large rents but they offered opportunities of building up a body of retainers through the patronage that could be dispensed by granting commanderies. Between them the Orders had some 183 such benefices available.²

In addition, the nobles enjoyed ever-growing revenues from mercedes. By 1447 the book of asientos (which listed grants to be paid out of the treasury) named D. Alvaro de Luna and Admiral Enriquez as holding 1,000,000 maravedís in juro de heredad. The five houses of Villena, Santillana, Haro, Benavente, and Castro held 500,000 maravedís apiece.³

During the reign of Henry IV, especially from the beginning of the civil wars in 1464, granting of mercedes reached epic proportions and

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1. Jules Klein, The Mesta: A Study in Spanish Economic History 1273-1836, (Cambridge Mass.), 1920, *passim*.
 2. J.H. Elliott, Imperial Spain 1469-1716 (London, 1963), p.102.
 3. Luis Suarez-Fernandez, Nobleza y Monarquía puntos de vista sobre la historia Castellana del siglo XV, (Valladolid, 1959), p.133.

competition to gain them from one party or the other partially explains the charade-like quality of the political alliances of the period.

Granting of mercedes became particularly heavy during the revolt of Prince Alfonso (beginning September 1464 and ending with his death in July 1468) when both sides sought to gain new supporters or attract members of the opposition. All the important families made enormous gains including: grants totalling 280,000 maravedís in juro de heredad awarded to Admiral Enríques between 30 March and 14 November 1465.¹

Heavy grants were also received by the Duke of Alva, Garcia Alvarez de Toledo, including the towns of Villa Nueva de Canedo and Granadilla, the fortresses of Carpio and Narros and 325,000 maravedís in juro.²

Alfonso Carillo, the all-powerful Archbishop of Toledo, obtained a total of 520,000 juro between 28 February 1465 and 8 March 1468.³ Other houses that were heavy gainers from the wars were: Juan de Estuñiga who received 200,000 maravedís in juro between 30 October 1465 and 10 June 1466 and a grant of 50,000 maravedís to be enjoyed in his lifetime in 1468.⁴ The Estuñiga generally were important gainers from the wars, as Pedro Estuñiga, the eldest son of D. Alvaro de Estuñiga Count of Plasencia, was given a total of 410,000 plus 1,000 quintales of oil on the diesmo of Seville.⁵

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1. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios 56 E 5.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios 35 A 11.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios 50 C 6.
 4. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios 57 E 13.
 5. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios 57 E 14.

Juan Pacheco, the master of Santiago, who was chief of the Alfonsine party, gained from both sides. Between 1464 and 1471 Pacheco received some 539,556 maravedís in juro, 87,000 maravedís por vida and the right to collect the servicio y montazgo of Montalvan, Venta del Cojo, Escalona, and Montal.¹ The Adelantado of Andalusia Fernando de Pareja was given 650,000 in juro between 14 May 1465 and 1 January 1473.² Rodrigo Alonso Pimental, Count of Benavente, obtained some 850,000 in juro and the right to collect the sheep taxes of the puerto of Villaharta during this same period.³ Nobles who gained from both sides during the Alfonsine wars included Maria Puertocarrero, who received 200,000 maravedís in juro de heredad from the Alfonsines on 15 January 1466, and the same amount again from the Enriquists on 12 November 1468.⁴ Pedro de Silva received the tercias of Posaltes, Rodilana, La Seca, Rueda, Ventosa, Moraleja de las Pandares, Rabe, Cabreiza, and El Campo from Henry's party in September 1465 and then on 9 July 1467 the Alfonsine party gave him the right to collect the pedidos, martiniega and cabeza de pecho of Vega de Olmedo.⁵

Not content with these generous mercedes some of the greater nobility began to collect, and divert to their own use, all the royal rents of the areas in which they had their greatest influence. In some cases, they would take advantage of a formal permit from one of the parties. This

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1. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 90 P 4.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 90 P 12.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 94 P 10.
 4. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 96 P 3.
 5. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 12 S 27.

occurred in the province of Murcia, which was dominated by its powerful Adelantado Pedro Fajardo. In September 1466 Fajardo received permission from Alfonso to collect all the royal rents of the Kingdom of Murcia. In the ten years 1466-1476 he collected, and diverted to his own use, some 9,500,000 maravedís of crown funds. The same thing happened in Andalusia where the Duke of Medina Sidonia expressed deep anger when Palencia's colleague Dr Antonio Rodríguez de Lillo resumed the collection of royal rents that had been "tyrannically usurped for many years by that magnate".¹

With the collection of the royal rents by their most powerful lords, some regions became wholly separated from central control. This occurred in Galicia, where, according to Pulgar, "neither the Queen's brother D. Enrique nor her father D. Juan could subjugate that Kingdom nor would the knights and other citizens obey them as they ought to have been obeyed ... They paid their taxes to whomever they chose".² A very similar thing occurred in Murcia beginning around the time that Pedro Fajardo received permission to collect royal rents. Zurita says that by 1467 Fajardo was being treated more like a king than a governor.³ By 1473 the disarticulation of Murcia from the rest of the kingdom had become complete. According to Pulgar, Murcia was as far from being a possession of the King as was the Kingdom of Navarre.⁴

During the first ten years of his reign (1454-1464), Henry's policy

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1. Palencia, *op. cit.*, p.247.
 2. Pulgar, Crónica, *op. cit.*, p.430.
 3. Zurita, Anales, IV in Torres Fontes, p.105.
 4. Pulgar, Letras, in Torres Fontes, p.117.

can be summed up as internal political stability achieved by relying on the power and acumen of the Marquis of Villena, Juan Pacheco, combined with aggression against the Kingdom of Granada. By 1461, despite the capture of some important places in Granada, the military side of his policy can be said to have failed, and with its failure dangerous pressure for a fundamental change in government began to build up. The latent discontent of the upper nobility found its leader in Pacheco himself who was incensed at having been deposed from his office of Master of Santiago by the new favourite D. Beltran de la Cueva. He had already begun to look for a way to reduce the power of the monarchy itself.¹

In April 1463, Pacheco left court after having secured the adhesion of Spain's richest prelate, the Archbishop of Toledo, to the growing conspiracy.² On 23 May a formal alliance was signed by Archbishop Carillo, Pacheco, Admiral Enríquez, Pedro Girón the Master of Calatrava, and the Counts of Alba de Liste and Paredes, with the express purpose of reforming the present government and "protecting" the interests of the Princes Alfonso and Isabel. The nobles then issued a manifesto outlining their complaints against Henry's government and detailing their own programme. This can be summed up briefly as follows:

1. Henry had given high government posts to persons of low estate, thus destroying public confidence in the Monarchy.
2. Because of the control that D. Beltran de la Cueva exercised over him, the King was

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.77.

2. Ibid., p.78.

no longer himself. His nobles' hearts were so saddened by this that they wept gotas de sangre (drops of blood).

3. Henry had violated the will of his father by granting the Order of Santiago to D. Beltran.
4. They demanded that Prince Alfonso be granted the Order.
5. They charged that Princess Juana was not Henry's daughter but was the illegitimate child of D. Beltran and the Queen.
6. They demanded that a Cortes be called to depose Juana from the succession to the throne and declare Alfonso heir. ¹

Henry's first reaction to these demands was to order the mobilization of his forces. On 27 September the troops of Badajoz, Coria and Trugillo were put under the command of Gomez Suarez de Figueros, Pedro Ponce de Leon and Juan de Sotomayor. These troops were to be held ready to co-operate with the forces under the command of the Count of Medinaceli and Marquis of Santillana in action against the Archbishop of Toledo. ²

However, an armed rising in Baeza and the rebellion of the important castle of Triana in Seville made Henry eager to negotiate with the rebels. An informal agreement providing for: the custody of Prince Alfonso to be given to Pacheco, (the sworn acceptance of) Alfonso as heir to the throne, and the renunciation of the Order of Santiago by D. Beltran de la Cueva was signed on 30 November 1464. ³

Despite the fact that most of the nobles' most extreme demands were

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.80.

2. Ibid., p.82.

3. Azcona, op. cit., p. 83.

met in this agreement it is the second phase of negotiations with Henry that reveals their true revolutionary spirit. This resulted in the so-called Sentencia de Medina, arrived at through the arbitration of Pacheco and Juan de Estuñiga representing the nobles and Pedro Velasco and Commander Gonzalo de Saavedra for the crown. As promulgated on 16 January 1465 the Sentencia was clearly meant to establish the primacy of the upper nobility over the monarchy. It provided that a noble could not be imprisoned under any pretext except by the consent of a committee composed of Pacheco, the Counts of Haro and Plasencia, three bishops including Carillo, and three representatives of the cities (Burgos, Toledo, Seville).¹ The council of Justice was to be reconstituted to include three nobles, three clergy and three letrados and the military force under the direct command of the King was to be reduced to 600 lances.²

The Sentencia de Medina was too much a surrender of royal power even for the pacific and vacillating Henry to accept. He decided to contest it and ordered his forces to mobilize in Salamanca while the rebel nobles, charging him with the non-observance of accords made with him up until then, removed themselves to Avila where they degraded him in effigy and elevated eleven-year-old Prince Alfonso to the throne.³ They also intensified their propaganda campaign against Henry, concentrating on the alleged illegitimacy of Princess Juana and the

1. Suarez, op. cit., p.153.

2. Ibid.

3. Azcona, op. cit., p.91.

consequent depravity of the King in allowing - even encouraging - intimacy between Queen and favourite:

He came to such depths of evil that he gave the Queen - called his wife - to the traitor D. Beltran de la Cueva - so that he could use her as he wished. 1

The nobles had now gone too far to retreat. Their strident propaganda against Juana's legitimacy and their elevation of Alfonso to the throne, instead of merely calling for his succession, testifies to their determination to take the government into their hands. If Henry would not agree to this neither would his daughter; to attain their ends it was necessary to champion the cause of Alfonso just because of its dubious legality. As King he would owe everything to their support. He would be forced to grant them the substance of the Sentencia de Medina and effective co-government with him. 2

Meanwhile, the nobles supporting Henry were moving in the same direction. By constant pressure throughout 1466-67 they forced him to declare his inability to act without their consent. In Segovia, on 28 June 1467, Henry was made to swear that he would not -

make a treaty with the Prince my brother nor with any of the prelates or knights in his company nor with anybody without the consent of the bishop of Calahorra. 3

Perhaps because of the success of the "loyalist" nobles in gaining these concessions from Henry, thus narrowing the differences between them and the rebels, perhaps because of the greater mercedes he could afford to

1. Ibid., p.92.

2. Ibid., p.93.

3. Archivo Historico Nacional, Ozuna, legajo 1860 n.38 in Azcona, p.94.

dispense, the first months of 1468 exhibit the gradual strengthening of the King's party at the expense of Alfonso. By the Spring of 1468 Henry's supporters had recaptured Coria and could count on the support of the Count of Benavente who changed sides in April of that year.¹

As the decline in the fortunes of the Alfonsines became precipitate with the capitulation of Toledo to the royalists on 3 June 1468, both sides prepared for battle. Suddenly, the Rebel position underwent a dramatic change. Prince Alfonso, after contracting the plague then raging in Old Castile, died on 5 July 1468.²

The immediate reaction of the Alfonsines was to transfer their allegiance to Isabel, but, recognizing the shift in power toward the Loyalists over the past few months, they recognized her not as Queen but as Henry's successor. They also sought to make up for their reduced forces by seeking aid from Juan II of Aragon. This desire by the Castilian nobles for Aragonese help coincided perfectly with Juan II's project for a marriage alliance between his son Ferdinand and Princess Isabel. On 1 November 1468 he sent his most experienced diplomat, the Navarrese Pierres de Peralta, to Castile with instructions to negotiate with both the Pacheco and Mendoza in order to gain support for the match.³

At the same time, Ferdinand himself opened a vigorous campaign aimed at winning over Isabel's immediate staff. He wrote to the head of her household, Alonso de Cardenas, on 7 June 1469, promising him possession

1. Ibid., p.115.

2. Ibid., p.116.

3. Azcona, op. cit., p.134.

of the fortress and town of Maqueda, 2,000 florins in juro de heredad and the commandery of Alpajar. Similar mercedes were offered to her contador mayor.¹

These manoeuvres on the part of Juan II and his son had their effect when, in February 1469, Pierres de Peralta and Gomes Manrique, the two Aragonese envoys, and the Archbishop of Toledo, representing Isabel, agreed on terms for the marriage. This agreement was later made into the "Capitulations of Cervera" of 7 March 1469 which provided for the legal co-government of Castile by Ferdinand and Isabella. In this agreement, it was stipulated that Ferdinand was to administer justice though swearing to respect municipal and ecclesiastical fueros. However, all documents pertaining to mercedes and the naming of prelates, masterships, corregidores, and judges had to be signed jointly. Furthermore, it was stipulated that Ferdinand could not leave Castile or remove his children without the permission of his wife.²

On 5 October 1469 Ferdinand left Zaragoza to join his betrothed at Valladolid. On the 18th of that same month they were married.

The very next day the Princess signed an agreement with their protector Alonso Carillo which conferred virtual co-governing powers upon him. With the desertion of Pacheco to the side of Henry and the neutrality of the powerful Mendoza family Carillo had been the pivot of the entire Aragonese party in Castile. He expected to be rewarded for his loyalty by a legal guarantee of supreme power. The revolutionary

1. Ibid., p.140.

2. Azcona, op. cit., 1p.143.

implications of the Sentencia de Medina were to be carried to their logical conclusion. Now, instead of simply weakening royal power and authority a powerful nobleman was to assume co-government with two young and inexperienced rulers brought to, and maintained in power through his support. The agreement provided that:

And from now on we will have you for our first and most important servant and relation and our unique and only friend and let all three of us be together agreed on the business and government of our properties, lands, kingdoms and provinces which were at our disposition and under our orders. 1

Furthermore, the agreement went on to stipulate that the Princes would not make agreements with any other noble family without the agreement and prior knowledge of the Archbishop:

Moreover we assure and promise that neither we nor either of us will make any league, or friendship with anyone in this Kingdom of whatever state or dignity without your agreement and consent.

In return for these guarantees Carillo, of course, promised to give his continued support, declaring his willingness to put "all in peril" to aid them.

Certainly, in the ensuing months, Carillo's aid was to become more and more necessary because Henry, fortified by a rebellion in Valladolid

1. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11-45:

E de aqui adelante vos ternemos por primero e principal servydor e pariente e por amigo syngular e solo entre nosotros; e que todos tres seamos en las cosas e gobernacion de nuestros casas e de las tierras e reynos e provincias que a nuestra disposicion e ordenacion fueron juntamente conformes ... Otrosy aseguramos e prometemos que nos ny alguno de nos farimos liga ni amystad ny conformydad con nynguno de estos reynos de qualesquier estado que sean syn espreso acuerdo e consentimiento de vos el dicho arcobispo.

favourable to his party and the friendly attitude of most of the important nobles, had decided to revoke his declaration of Isabel's right to succeed him on the throne. On 26 October 1470 Henry, in company with representatives of most of the important Castilian nobles, revoked the oath taken in the Pacto de Guisando on 25 September 1468 and proclaimed Juana's legitimacy and her right to succeed him. The declaration was sworn to by the Marquis of Villena, the Counts of Plasencia, Miranda and Benavente, the Archbishop of Seville, and the representatives of Burgos, Salamanca, Avila, Guadalajara, Valladolid and Soria. Present also were the Cardinal of Albi and the Count of Boulogne as representatives of Juana's betrothed Charles Duke of Guienne.¹

Once again Carillo's firm support plus the ever-shifting loyalties of the nobles - only temporarily in Henry's camp - came to the Princes' rescue. From their base in the Archbishop's fortress of Alcala de Henares they were able to attract the province of Viscaya to their standard after the nobles of Henry's party in the province were defeated by the Count of Trevino. More important in forcing a favourable settlement, however, was the friendly attitude of Henry's unscrupulous mayordomo Andres de Cabrera, who had become alienated from the King after Juan Pacheco had attempted to deprive him of his town of Segovia.² With the adhesion of Rodrigo Pimental, Count of Venavente, to the cause of the Princes Henry had no choice but to agree to a meeting with Isabel.

At this conference, which took place in Segovia beginning on

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.167.

2. Azcona, op. cit., p.193.

29 December 1473, a final settlement was arranged which provided for the marriage of Juana to Henry of Aragon and her renunciation of all claim to the Castilian throne, and renewed recognition of Isabel's rights by the King.¹ It was there, at a sumptuous banquet given by Isabel's new supporter Cabrera that Henry first felt the pangs of the severe stomach ailment that was to result in his painful and medically strange death just a few months later.²

By 11 December 1474 Henry was dead and Isabel lost no time in exploiting the situation - by the 16th, a letter, relating the death of her brother, had been dispatched to all the major cities of Castile. It ordered that they were to recognize her as Queen from the day of its receipt.

As soon as you see this letter raise pennants for me, recognizing me as your Queen and natural lord and the most high and most powerful Prince King Ferdinand, my lord, as my legitimate husband with the solemnities customary in this case.³

By 15 January 1475 a formal agreement, called the "Acuerdo para la gobernacion del reino" had been signed with Ferdinand which set forth the roles of two sovereigns in the future government. The acuerdo ratified the co-governing agreements made at the time of Isabel's marriage and extended them in several important ways. Besides providing that they were to act jointly in the provision of masterships and bishoprics and

1. Ibid., p.194.

2. G. Marañón, Ensayo biológico sobre Enrique IV de Castilla, (Madrid, 1934), p.82.

3. Archivo Municipal de Zamora, leg. 19-18 in Azcona, p.210.

in the administration of justice, it states that the rents of Castile and those of Aragon and Sicily were to be used to defer the expenses of the joint administration and that the Queen alone was to concede mercedes and oficios. In addition, following the usage practised until then, only Isabel was to receive the homage of the fortresses of Castile.¹ Of course, these co-governing agreements were meant by Ferdinand's supporters to be subject to revision in his favour and indeed this would have been the case except for the extraordinary personality of Isabel herself. She proved to be invaluable in the governing of the state and without her aid many of Ferdinand's most important operations (such as the Granada conflict) would have been gravely affected.

From the reign of the first Trastamara, Henry II, to the death of Henry IV in 1474, the great magnates of Castile had not only gained overwhelming economic and political predominance over all other social classes but by the first part of the latter's reign were already scheming to replace the monarchy by an oligarchy.

During the long civil wars between Henry and the princes they almost succeeded in accomplishing this. Henry's compact with the nobles of his party not to make a treaty with "the Prince my brother nor with anybody" without the consent of the Bishop of Calahorra, and his policy of allowing four of the principal nobles to share in the government in successive four-month terms, and Ferdinand and Isabella's compact with Alonso Carillo set the seal on the rise to power of the nobles in both

1. Ibid., p.217.

the "loyal" and the "rebel" camps.

Several factors intervened to weaken the nobles' position during the critical period just before and just after the accession of Ferdinand and Isabella. The foremost of these was the endemic jealousy of one group of nobles for the other. Thus, reaching out to the Mendoza by obtaining the election of Gonzalo de Mendoza to the College of Cardinals was a way of capitalising on the inherent jealousy of the Mendoza-Alba-Enríquez group for the Carillo-Acuna. By November 1474 the Archbishop's anger at being passed over for the primacy caused his withdrawal from court (thereby abandoning his special position), and the winning over of the Mendoza group was complete. With the departure of Carillo no other noble was allowed to replace him in importance and the practice of allowing noble co-government was terminated.

Another factor in the weakened position of the nobility was more fortuitous. This was the death on 4 October 1474 of the master of Santiago, Juan Pacheco. Far and away the most powerful, subtle and experienced of the great magnates, he had inspired the nobles' revolution and had been the leading spirit behind first the Alfonsine and then the Enriquist parties. His timely removal from the political scene and the youth or extreme age of some of the heads of important families - like Cardinal Mendoza or the master of Calatrava or the new Marquis of Villena, Diego Lopez Pacheco, lowered the quality of the nobles' leadership at a crucial moment and left room for the re-assertion of monarchical authority.

CHAPTER II

THE CHANGING BASIS OF MONARCHICAL POWER DURING THE CIVIL WAR 1475-1479

By their alienation of Archbishop Carillo and their refusal to share the government with a coalition of nobles the young monarchs made manifest their desire to restore and enhance the position of the crown. However, with total revenues below 900,000 reales¹ they were still to be heavily dependent on the support of the great magnates for money, troops and arms in the coming civil war. At its beginning, their fate was to depend, in large part, on the outcome of hostilities between two great noble coalitions: the Alba-Enríquez-Mendoza and the Pacheco-Carillo-Zúñiga-Benavente. Their efforts to escape from this situation were the beginning of profound and far-reaching changes in the basis of monarchical power that were to transform Castile into the first nation of Europe.

The entire first part of the civil war, roughly from 1475 to 1477, should be considered a continuation of the political situation prevailing before the accession of Ferdinand and Isabella. Just as in the days of Prince Alfonso, the upper nobility, secure in their monopoly of military power, engaged in an elegant series of manoeuvres aimed at making themselves essential to the crown by maintaining the pro-Portuguese party as a threat to its existence. Although the hostility between the two major bands of nobles was strong, the bonds of common interest were stronger still, and both sides realized that the decisive defeat of one or the other could only mean defeat for them all.

1. Elliott, op. cit. p.80.

This ambiguity became evident right from the beginning of the conflict. While the King of Portugal's forces entered Castile during May 1475 the principal nobles contrived to hold Ferdinand inactive in Valladolid:

Deceiving him with various diversions so that he would not adopt any course of action and thus, almost exclusively occupied in distractions, without speaking of anything else but jousts and public tournaments, he would consume the money that had been collected. ¹

The time gained would, of course, allow Alfonso to complete his dispositions and make final arrangements for the Portuguese succession.² At the same time, the exhaustion of Ferdinand's supply of funds would place him in the position of having to "obey those same people who just previously had sworn to obey his orders".³

These diversions had indeed served to place Ferdinand in a dangerous situation - from which he was only rescued by Alfonso's poor strategic sense. Instead of securing Seville, Carmona, Ecija and Cordoba, and from there passing to the occupation of Toledo through the lands of nobles loyal to him, he changed course to enter the territory of his ally the Duke of Plasencia. This gave Isabella time to reinforce Tordesillas as a base for operations against Alfonso's supply line and issue a confirmation of the general pardon granted to the city of Toledo for all crimes committed during the previous wars, that served to rally

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1. Palencia, op. cit., pp.387-8.
 2. Azcona, op. cit., p.232.
 3. Palencia, op. cit., III, p.388.

the city to the loyalist side.¹

By 14 July 1475 a considerable army had been concentrated on Tordesillas made up of some 2,000 men-at-arms, 6,000 horse and 20,000 foot. This compared very favourably with the Portuguese force quartered in the now hostile Toro of something under 15,000 foot and 5,000 horse plus a small contingent from Castile.²

However, when Ferdinand's army began to advance, it had to pass through an area in which most of the strategic points were held by pro-Portuguese forces. The existence of these positions raised severe supply problems in the rear of the advancing loyalists. Furthermore, because of the delay caused by the procrastinations of the nobles, money was running short even before the expedition began. Finally, the fall of Zamora to the forces of the Marquis of Villena, D. Diego Lopez Pacheco, and Alfonso de Valencia increased the supply problem so alarmingly that it was feared that the army would be gravely imperilled by a long campaign. Even Ferdinand's desperate attempt to provoke the Portuguese forces in Toro to present themselves for battle met with failure as the Portuguese, perhaps advised of the state of Ferdinand's army as alleged by Palencia, or simply afraid to risk battle, remained safely hidden behind its walls.³ As Ferdinand's army was not equipped with siege engines the only course was retreat.

After the failure at Toro loyalist attention was turned to the

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.325.

2. Ibid., p.240.

3. Palencia, op. cit., p.456.

conquest of Burgos castle, a place of the greatest strategic importance. If left in undisputed possession of it for too long, the Estuñiga, who had gone over to Alfonso, would be able to master the city and extend their control over the entire province. If they then allied themselves with the French in Fuentarrabía they could together dominate the north. Ferdinand was determined to prevent this and by late June 1475 he had organized siege lines around the citadel and commenced mining operations. Isabella remained in Valladolid in order to impede Portuguese reinforcements coming from Zamora or Toro.¹ In this she was successful (due mainly to Alfonso's indecisiveness), and the Portuguese returned to Arevalo in the vain hope of trading the liberty of Ferdinand's cousin Rodrigo Pimental Count of Benavente for the raising of the siege.²

Despite the failure of the Portuguese reinforcements, the siege itself went very slowly. Not only was the castle well provided with food and water but several of the nobles, who were in charge of important sections of the trench line, were sympathetic to the defenders. D. Pedro de Velasco, Count of Haro, was the principal of these and in scheming to act as an intermediary between the castle and its besiegers so that he himself might gain possession he:

wanted neither to press the enemy garrison too closely nor to raise the siege, confident that the delay would procure him some advantage.³

This deadlock was broken by the arrival of the King's bastard

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.243.

2. Ibid., p.244.

3. Palencia, op. cit., p.32.

brother Alfonso de Aragon on 22 November 1475. Alfonso, certainly the best military mind among all the Iberian royal families, was an expert in mines and in the making and setting of siege engines. From the date of his arrival a notable tightening of the siege took place that resulted in an almost total loss of communications by the garrison with their friends outside and the deprivation of their water supply. Loss of their water was the final blow which brought them to sue for terms. In return for their lives and property they promised to deliver the castle to a royal garrison within two months.¹

Loyalist attention could now be turned to the formation of a new field army, based on Valladolid, Tordesillas, Madrigal, and Medina, that would be capable of capturing Zamora and cutting off the Portuguese in Toro. Determined to prevent this, Alfonso sallied from Toro on 13 February but had to return without result. He then made an attempt to relieve his garrison in the besieged castle of Zamora but, cut off by troops under the command of Alfonso de Aragon, once more began to retire, now closely pursued by Ferdinand with the bulk of the Castilian army. Caught at the hamlet of Peleagonzalo which lies between San Miguel de Gros and Toro he was immediately attacked and routed by troops under the command of Ferdinand himself, Cardinal Mendoza, the Count of Alba de Liste, and the Marquis of Coria.² With the virtual destruction of the Portuguese field army the capitulation of Zamora could not be long

1. P. Luciano Serrano, Los Reyes Catolicos y la ciudad de Burgos, (Madrid, 1943), p.161.

2. Azcona, op. cit., p.247.

delayed. By 19 March 1476 terms for its surrender had been agreed and the first phase of the war had come to an end.¹

Military operations, until the intervention of Prince Alfonso de Aragon, in the siege of Burgos castle, had been characterized by a distinct unwillingness, on the part of "loyalist" nobles, to come to grips with the Portuguese and their Castilian supporters. They preferred to keep the rebellion alive by preventing decisive actions, by procrastination and treachery. In so doing they were only repeating the tactics that had served them so well during the reign of Henry IV. As long as they held a monopoly on military power their attitude was the key to peace and Ferdinand and Isabella were forced to grant mercedes to their supporters and generous terms to any rebels wishing to change sides just as their predecessor had done.

In order to encourage "loyal" nobles to greater efforts against their opponents they were granted extensive mercedes from both crown rents and the lands and rents of rebel nobles. The latter occurred particularly with reference to the war against the Marquis of Villena, D. Diego Lopez Pacheco. The Count of Trevino, Pedro Manrique, was promised 100,000 maravedís of juro de heredad from the rents of captured territory in the Marquisate because his wife Dona Giomar had been deprived of the tercias of Escalona by Juan Pacheco and his son Diego. He was also forgiven for any illegal seizures of property effected by him during the previous reign, granted 2,000,000 maravedís toward his own war

1. Ibid., p.248.

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expenses and 1,200 vassals in the archbishoprics of Osma and Calahorra.¹ Another merced connected with the war against the Marquis was the granting of the city of Cartegena to the Adelantado of Murcia, D. Pedro Pajardo. This was given to him for his vigorous and successful persecution of hostilities against the Marquisate of which he was made the head in a royal cedula of 15 April 1475.²

The "loyal" nobles of Andalusia were also given extensive mercedes. Juan de Silva, the Count of Cifuentes was restored to the possession of one-half the town of Palos from which he had been ejected by the rebel Gonzalo de Estuñiga.³ D. Pedro Enríquez Adelantado of Andalusia, was confirmed in Henry's grant of the tercias of the Archbishopric of Seville and Bishopric of Cadiz. On 15 February 1475 his cousin, the Admiral of Castile, D. Alfonso Enríquez obtained the office of Receiver of the diesmo of oil of Seville as a reward for his financial support during the war. He was also granted the royal fifth and all other duties owed to the crown from prizes taken on the high seas.⁴

Other grants to "loyal" nobles during the war included a grant of the sheep tolls of Toledo given, on 14 August 1475, to the Comendador Mayor of Leon D. Cutierre de Cardenas.⁵ A vitiary grant of 47,000 maravedís held by Juan de Guzman Lord of Teba was changed to juro de

1. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11-18.

2. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Cartelario Real 1494-1504, ff.241v-243 v.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 17 February 1477, f.129.

4. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 56 B2, 3, 10.

5. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 46 C 7.

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heredad on 16 August 1476.¹

The powerful Mendoza family also received numerous mercedes. D. Lorenzo de Mendoza, Count of Coruna, was granted the tercias of the town of Paredes when it was confiscated from Pedro de Almazan, the pro-Portuguese alcayde of Atienza.² The Count of Monteagudo, another Pedro de Mendoza, was granted custody of the fortresses of Castil de Tierra, Non Paredes and Blieco for his services in reducing the strongly fortified church of Santa Maria de la Blanca one of the most important rebel positions during the siege of Burgos castle.

The young monarchs were also interested in causing defections from the ranks of nobles supporting Alfonso and Juana; in order to do this they were prepared to make favourable terms and offer generous mercedes to them if they would change sides. One of the most important rebel families was that of the Estuñiga who were Dukes of Arevalo and Counts of Plasencia. Their support for Alfonso began to weaken after his supine attitude during the siege of Burgos castle had cost them their most prized possession.³ Its fall and permanent alienation from the family which was sworn to by Isabella on 19 January 1476 brought Alvaro de Estuñiga's son Juan to Tordesillas to discuss surrender terms with her.

Pulgar's account of the agreement reached between the Queen and the Estuñiga is yet another example of his complete unreliability when dealing with the events of the civil war. Juan is made to claim that

1. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 66 G 14.

2. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 82 M 4.

3. Pulgar, Crónica, p.165.

his father was no longer responsible for his actions because he was "old and, deceived by the duplicity of his wife, he had resigned the governance of his estates to her." His mother's inordinate ambition for his future greatness had led her to "risk the estate and inheritance many times" also causing the present disobedience for which Juan begged the Queen's pardon in her name.¹ Isabel, with her characteristic mercifulness, "pardoned very easily the errors committed against her". The family was then reduced to obedience and became so loyal that they restored the town of Arevalo to the royal patrimony.²

The agreement that brought the Estuñiga over to the loyalist side was not negotiated by Juan de Estuñiga at all but by Ruy Dias de Mendoza acting for Juan's father Alvaro. Furthermore, among its clauses it was stipulated that the family was to be confirmed in its possession of Arevalo on an even stronger basis than in the original grant. Previously it has been stipulated that the crown could reclaim Arevalo from the Estuñiga at any time if an equivalent were offered to them. The new agreement confirmed the grant without "entering in it the said condition". The agreement also provided that the crown turn against its loyal supporter Alvaro de Monroy who had been fighting the Estuñiga for possession of the Order of Alcantara. If Monroy's attacks could not be stopped through mediation it was agreed that:

1. Ibid., p. 179.
2. Ibid., p. 80.

Within 75 days a captain with 300 lances paid by their Highnesses was to be sent to the lands of the Order to join the Duke. 1

Even the normally reliable Palencia does not report the generous mercedes that had to be made to the Marquis of Cadiz, D. Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, in return for his desertion of the Portuguese. Palencia makes him gratefully accept charge of Andalusian forces in default of the vacillating Duke of Medina Sidonia. He showed himself very appreciative of the trust placed in him and "with humble words offered himself entirely in their service".²

If indeed the Marquis showed gratitude, it was probably occasioned by the fact that he was granted the right to levy a tax of one percent on all merchandise discharged at the port of Cadiz.³ As a further inducement he received, on 30 April 1476, a merced of the tercias of Jerez de la Frontera.⁴

Other rebels who received generous settlements in return for their renewed allegiance included Inigo Lopes de Estuñiga, defender of Burgos castle, with a grant of 210,000 maravedís in juro included in the surrender agreement.⁵ The pardon given to another rebel, Juan Tellez Girón, Count of Urena, is also an example of leniency as it included

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1. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11-199:
dentro de setenta e cinco dias envian un capitan suyo con
trescientos lancas pagadas a costa de los dichos senores reyes
para que el dicho capitan se junta con el dicho duque.
 2. Palencia, op. cit., p.246.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 30 April 1476, f.204.
 4. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 95 P 5.
 5. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 73 L 4.

the rich tenancy of Carmona among the things that were to be given to the Count.¹

An agreement was also made, on 13 September 1476, with the Archbishop of Toledo which although it did not provide for the granting of any mercedes served to take the military pressure off the Archbishopric and left him in possession of all his rents and property. In return for an act of obedience to the Queen, in which he swore that Henry IV died "without leaving a legitimate son or daughter", the monarchs promised to maintain his house and restore all the property that had been captured from the Archbishop, his sons and their servants.²

The years 1475-76 saw a continuation of the relationship between crown and nobility characteristic of the reign of Henry IV. Rebellion of one party of nobles opposed by a "loyalist" faction that continued to maintain close contact with it led to a progressive weakening of royal authority and reduction of the royal patrimony through granting of mercedes to both "loyalists" and "rebels".

At the end of 1476, Ferdinand and Isabella, now safely established after the Portuguese defeat at Paleagonzalo, worked out a new policy designed for common application to both "loyalists" and "rebels". Basically, its aims were to reduce wartime mercedes and wrest as many key economic and strategic positions from the nobility as possible.

The beginnings of this new policy can be seen as early as the end

1. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 59-23 in Azcona, p.269.

2. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11-101, 11, 84 in Azcona, p.270.

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of the siege of Burgos. Ferdinand's brother, Alfonso de Aragon, had originally entered Castile in order to fight for possession of the Order of Calatrava, whose master was the rebel Rodrigo Telles Girón. By the middle of 1475 when Alfonso, obeying the entreaties of his brother, consented to direct the siege, his allies the Master of Santiago, Diego de Cordova, and Fernan Ramiriz de Guzman, Commander of Calatrava, had already reduced many of the Order's most important castles.¹

With the capitulation of Burgos castle Rodrigo had once again to fear renewed efforts by Alfonso directed against his possession of the Order, especially since it might reasonably be expected that he would receive title to it for his recent services. This was not to be the case, however, as Alfonso was sent off to police Burgos province and Girón was allowed an easy truce and continued possession of the Order. Despite his brother's distinguished services, Ferdinand was not disposed to permit him to obtain possession of one of the key economic and political positions in Castile. By granting the tenancy of Carmona to Rodrigo's brother, Juan Tellez Girón, the crown set the seal on its reconciliation with the family and ended any hope that Alfonso might have still entertained of profiting at their expense.²

Loyalist families were also gravely disappointed in the crown's attitude over the mastership of Santiago. Immediately upon the death of its master, Rodrigo Manrique, on 11 November 1476, a letter was

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1. Diego de Valera, Crónica de los Reyes Catolicas, Juan de M. Carriazo editor (Madrid, 1927), p.270.
 2. Diego de Valera, Crónica de los Reyes Catolicos, Juan de M. Carriazo editor (Madrid, 1927), p.270.

dispatched to the head of the Aragonese party at the Court of Rome, Cardinal Rodrigo Borja, requesting him to procure the mastership for Ferdinand himself.¹ As Santiago was the largest and most important of the military orders, containing some 94 commanderies, it would represent a considerable increase in patronage under the direct control of the crown while its rents would be of great help in repaying loans contracted during the civil war.

At the same time, the Queen herself went to a meeting of the Order's commanders at Ucles where she was able to bring about Ferdinand's election as master. Although it did not prove possible to retain the mastership in the face of determined pressure from Gutierre de Cardenas, Comendador Mayor of Leon, the general lines of monarchical policy toward the Orders had been laid down. Eventually this policy was to result in full possession of the masterships and income of all three orders which were finally incorporated into the royal patrimony by a papal bull of 1523.²

The final agreement made with Alonso Carillo after the second Portuguese invasion of 1478 can only be seen as a determined attempt to reduce drastically his temporal power. He had aided the Portuguese again, thereby breaking his oath of loyalty, and the crown's response was to require all major fortresses in the Archbishopric to be turned over to alcaldes nominated by the crown. These new alcaldes would then

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.277.

2. Elliott, op. cit., p.77.

have to swear fealty not to the Archbishop but to the monarchy itself. The town and fortress of Useda were to be left in the hands of Troylos Carillo, the Archbishop's illegitimate son, but the town of Talavera was to be surrendered to Diego Lopes de Ayala who was to become corregidor.¹

Other rebels who were deprived of strategic possessions after the failure of the second Portuguese invasion included Fernan Arias de Saavedra who was forced to exchange Tarifa and Castellar for 271,210 maravedís in juro on 20 November 1476.² On 2 August 1480 the former rebel Comendador Francisco de Soto gave custody of the town and fortress of Magasuela to Lays Puertocarrero; while in August of the same year Lope Vasquez de Acuna agreed to surrender Huste to the crown in return for a merced to be given to him within twelve months.³

Finally, a new agreement was negotiated with the Estuñiga which, while renewing crown support for the election of Pedro de Estuñiga as Grand Master of Alcantara, contained a provision that confirmed the return of Arevalo to the royal patrimony. The alcavalas and tercias of the order were to be collected by and for the crown and not usurped by the Master as had been the practice under Henry.⁴ The Estuñiga also agreed to use no longer the title of Duke of Arevalo but to become Counts of Plasencia. Furthermore, in return for help of royal troops in capturing fortresses belonging to the Order of Alcantara, Juan de

1. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11-47.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 3 August 1480, f.5.

3. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11-84.

4. A.G. Simancas, Privilegios Reales, 11-26.

Estuñiga was required to give up the town of Trugillo.¹

The provision of Grand Masterships was not the only area in which the interests of "loyal" nobles were disregarded after 1476. Many of them found, just as had the rebel Estuñiga, that the generous agreements made with them during 1475-76 were being revised in favour of the crown. Marshal Garcia Lopes de Ayala, who obtained a royal order revoking a privilege held by the city of Coruna that protected it from alienation from the royal patrimony, and then was granted possession of the town and its fortress "during the movements in these kingdoms with the King of Portugal", found his merced revoked on 11 February 1480.² Diego de Rojas, Marquis of Denia, found himself forced to make an agreement for the return of the fortress of Guimel de Izan to the rebel from whom he had captured it.³ D. Pedro de Mendoza, Count of Monteagudo, who had been granted custody of the fortresses of Castil de Tierra and Blieco was later given a merced of 1,500,000 maravedís because, owing to the destruction of the two castles by royal order, he had never been able to enjoy possession of them.⁴

The crown's grant of Cartegena to Pedro Fajardo was also revoked. This revocation and the overall reduction in the power and importance of the semi-independent Fajardo holdings came about through an astute marriage agreement made with Pedro Fajardo after the death of his only

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1. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11-42.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 11 February 1480, f.34.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 101 R 18.
 4. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 82 M 7.

son Juan in April 1477.¹ After Juan died his sister Juysa became sole heiress to all the family holdings. Thus, the contemplated marriage of Luysa and Juan Chacon, son of Isabella's steward, Gonzalo Chacon, Lord of Casarubios, which had originally been proposed by the crown, was now pushed as a way of preventing the Fajardo from becoming even more powerful through connection with another great family. Chacon was the perfect match for Luysa if the power and independence of the Fajardo were to be reduced. His father, Lord of the unimportant Casarubios, was insignificant except as a crown official and was not rich enough to provide his son with a dowry of the scale necessary to contemplate marriage with a Fajardo. Without heavy crown support they could not hope to make such a brilliant marriage, and, once it was effected, they would be in no position to refuse any demands the monarchs might make on them. Thus, after Pedro Fajardo's death on 30 December 1482, the crown proceeded to reclaim Cartegena from Chacon and Luysa.²

Perhaps the most striking example of the evolution of royal policy from reconciliation of disaffected nobles to outright attempts to reduce their power is the treatment of the Marquis of Villena Diego Lopes Pacheco. The possessions left to him by his father formed one of the most important senorios of Castile. Their strategic position between Toledo and Murcia, controlling communications between the Mediterranean coast and the valley of the Guadalquivir, and their great economic

1. Torres Fontes, op. cit., p.163.

2. Torres Fontes, op. cit., p.191.

strength based on the control of numerous important towns had long served to make their possessor the arbitrator of Castilian politics. Its last ruler, Juan Pacheco had not only brought the Mastership of Santiago into the orbit of its Marquises but had also added a large number of important fortresses and towns to the Marquisate including Sax, Utiel, Requena, Alcaraz, and Alarcon.¹

After the crushing defeat inflicted on Juan's son and heir Diego Lopez Pacheco at the hands of Pedro Fajardo during the first war of the Marquisate the crown signed an agreement with him which, although rather tough in some respects, left him in possession of most of the key places of the señorio. In return for Diego's recognition of Ferdinand and Isabella and his renunciation of the Portuguese, he was allowed to retain possession of the towns of Villena, Chinchilla, and Belmonte and the fortresses of Alarcon, San Clemente, Iniesta, Alcala, Jerquera, La Roda, Albacete, Hellin, Tobarra, Jumilla, Yeola, Sax, Almansa, Utiel, Velez Rubio, Velez Blanco, and El Bonillo along with various salt lakes and the lucrative office of mayordomo mayor.² According to another provision, all the places that had risen against the Marquis after 18 September 1476 were to be returned to him immediately.

The agreement was to run for twenty months before coming into full effect and was to be subject to the good behaviour of the Marquis during that time. As a guarantee of the completion of the articles relating

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1. Juan Torres Fontes, "La conquista del Marquesado de Villena", Hispania, XIII, Num. L (1953), 40.
 2. Juan Torres Fontes, "La conquista del Marquesado de Villena", Hispania, XIII, Num. L (1953), 80.

to mutual surrender of fortresses, Gonzalo de Avila, Lord of Villatoro, was to be given control of the fortresses of Sax and Villena, captured from the Marquis by royal forces, and, as a pledge of good faith from the Marquis, the fortresses of Chinchilla and Almansa. The key fortress of Trugillo was also to be turned over to him by the crown for the full twenty-month period as security for completion of a clause providing for compensation to be given to the Marquis for the parts of his possessions that were to go to the crown. Within ten days after the signing of the agreement the Marquis was to give the alcazares (fortifications) of Madrid to Juan de Bovadilla a regidor of Medina del Campo. It was stipulated that these fortifications were to be given to the crown if it complied with the provision for turning Villena and Sax over to Gonzalo de Avila and with the other articles concerning restoration of the Marquis's remaining possessions.¹

However, despite the Marquis's faithful compliance with his side of the agreements by turning the fortress of Chinchilla over to Gonzalo de Avila and the alcazares of Madrid to Juan de Bovadilla as he had promised, the monarchs had not the slightest intention of complying with their side of the bargain. Royal officials commanding troops used in the Marquisate during hostilities continued military action despite the agreement. They captured the fortress of Almansa just after it was signed and then proceeded to lay siege to the towns and castles of Ves and Jorquera, places specifically left to the Marquis in the

1. Juan Torres Fontes, "La conquista del Marquesado de Villena", Hispania, XIII, Num. L (1953), 81.

agreement. Furthermore, it was ordered that Villena not be turned over to Gonzalo de Avila as stipulated but instead remain in the hands of its conqueror Mosen Gaspar Fabra.¹ The Marquis's attempt to meet Juan II of Aragon in an effort to use his influence to moderate his son's apparent hostility was prevented by Ferdinand, who acted in accordance with the Queen's wishes.²

Pacheco's only chance to save his possessions and force the crown to comply with its obligations under the treaty was to keep the only strong position remaining to him - Trugillo castle which was defended by his most experienced and loyal captain Pedro de Baza. Pedro, who had been a loyal servant of his father, refused the bribes offered to him by the Queen and managed to defeat royal forces several times before a frightened Diego was brought to the castle by royal order and compelled to demand its surrender on pain of losing all his other possessions. On 24 June 1477 it was given to Avila as stipulated but without even the slightest provision being made to satisfy the just complaints of the Marquis. Instead, the salinas of Pinella, which had been ordered returned to him in the 1476 agreement, were kept for the Count of Paredes to whom they had been awarded during the Marquis's disobedience.³

No change can be recorded in royal policy toward the Marquis during 1478. Although the twenty months stipulated for the return of Trugillo

1. Ibid., p.84.

2. Zurita, Anales, IV, p.267 in Torres Fontes, "La conquista", p.95.

3. Torres Fontes, "La conquista", p.95.

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to Pacheco's control were past by early July, Ferdinand intervened to prevent this and gained his fearful acquiescence for two prorogations.¹ At the same time, hostilities were continued against the Marquisate by troops under the command of the new Royal governor Fernando de Frias who laid siege to the castle of Chinchilla.²

Now, with the help of Pedro de Baeza, Pacheco began to organize his forces to resist further encroachments on his possessions. At the end of 1478 he and Baeza set about the task of reinforcing the garrison in Trugillo and putting other castles in a state of readiness. Diego's defiance gave the crown an opportunity to renew open hostilities all over the Marquisate this time using forces coming from the recently organized Santa Hermandad.³

However, the magnificent defence mounted by the Marquis's forces had made the military situation of the royal armies precarious by September 1479. Despite Ferdinand's repeated efforts, no progress could be made against the Marquis. This was due, firstly to the failure, on the part of provincial Hermandades, to send their quota of troops, and secondly to the outright hostility of many of the most important nobles to the entire enterprise. Already, during the successful relief of Chinchilla in 1478, one of the signatories to the 1477 agreement, the Duke of Infantado, had sent his own son to aid the Marquis against royal forces. Now, Pedro Fajardo himself, as captain-general of the war,

1. Ibid., p.95.

2. Torres Fontes, "La conquista", p.98.

3. Ibid., p.104.

negotiated a truce with Diego, without requesting royal authorization.¹

Pressure was at once applied by the Marquis and his powerful relations Pedro Fernandez de Velasco the Constable of Castile, and the Comendador Mayor of Leon, D. Gutierre de Cardenas, with a view to gaining a permanent settlement from the crown. The agreement which was finally signed on 2 March 1480 offered scant comfort and recognition for the Marquis. Despite his victory in the war, most of the important fortresses and towns retained by him in the treaty of 1477 were to be given to the crown. These included Chinchilla, recently saved from capture by royal forces under the command of Licenciado Frias, Villena, seat of the Marquisate, Almansa, Utiel, Sax, Iniesta, Yecla, El Bonillo, and Villanueva de la Fuente. Furthermore, all other places that had risen in favour of the crown before the signing of Fajardo's armistice were also to be retained in royal possession.²

Out of his former possessions the Marquis was allowed to retain only the towns of Belmonte, Ararcon, Alcala del Rio Jucar, Zafra and Jumilla, the castle of Garcimuñoz, and to recover the salinas of Pinilla and Jorquera now held by Gaspar Fabra.³ In compensation for his lost rents the Marquis was promised a lump sum of two million maravedís per year but it was provided that he was to devote some 350,000 of this to pay the tenancies of Chinchilla, Villena, Almansa, Hellin Sax and Ves. Another 500,000 maravedís was discounted to compensate the crown for

1. Ibid., p.108.

2. Torres Fontes, "La conquista", p.111.

3. Ibid., p.113.

losing Escalona given to the Marquis in partial compensation for his lost property. Thus, a total of 850,000 maravedís was discounted, leaving him only 1,150,000 maravedís to compensate him for a revenue loss that must have amounted to many times that figure.¹

The second war of the Marquisate of Villena and its final destruction as a virtually separate state within Castile was the crowning achievement of royal policy toward the nobility in the years 1477-1480. By dismembering the Marquis's señorio and reducing the power of loyal nobles like Rodrigo Manrique, Ferdinand and Isabella had shown that they no longer looked to the nobility as their prime supporters. Already, from almost the beginning of the Portuguese war, the dim outlines of a new base of support in the towns had begun to appear.

During the previous reign the willingness of most of the important Castilian towns to stand with the crown against the princes and their supporters had manifested itself on several occasions. Not only could Henry IV count on the selfless devotion of the citizens of certain towns such as Simancas² but in the years 1464, 1467 and 1468 Hermandades or brotherhoods were formed spontaneously with the intention of supporting Henry first against the Alfonsine party and then against Isabella.³

The Junta of Burgos, called by member towns just after the death of Prince Alfonso, made the loyalist sympathies of the municipalities abundantly clear. At the meeting they swore to continue their Hermandad

1. Torres Fontes, "La conquista", p.114.

2. Azcona, op. cit., p.92.

3. Ibid., p.98.

and work for "the restitution and conservation of the crown of Castile and the pacification of the kingdom".¹ Although in the end these Hernandades came to nothing and were dissolved owing to the opposition of the nobles and the weakness of the crown, they provided a valuable indication for the future of the strong loyalties of the towns and their willingness to fight for the monarchy.

Royal policy toward the towns and the urban ruling class during the war of succession can be divided into two periods: 1475-1476 and 1476-1480. During the first of these great care was taken to confirm and extend the vital privileges of the cities and their governing class with a view to gaining at least passive support for the crown. This was necessary not only because the loss of a major town could provide the invading army with shelter and a base of support astride important lines of communications (as in the case of Toro), but also because municipal contingents had long formed one of the most important elements in the hosts raised by great nobles for private war.

One of the most attractive promises of support in Castile made by Diego Pacheco in order to induce Alfonso V to intervene was the potential adhesion of many of the major towns and the military support they would be able to provide. He felt he could promise this because his allies controlled municipal fortifications and could count on their garrisons as well as support within the town itself. According to Pacheco, the city of Leon could be guaranteed because of the promise of the Duke of

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.120.

Valencia, D. Juan de Acuña, to occupy it by "force or cunning".

Toledo would be in the Portuguese camp because its Archbishop Alonso Carillo and his relations the Count of Cifuentes and Juan de Ribera held respectively the Cathedral tower, the alcazar and the city gates "that were considered as fortresses". Burgos would be sure to fall to the combined forces of D. Luis de Acuña its Bishop and Inigo de Estuniga alcalde of the castle. Equally, the power of Alfonso de Aguilar in Cordoba, Luis Puertocarrero in Eciija and Rodrigo Ponce de Leon in Cadiz and Jerez would serve to deliver these cities. In Salamanca, Pacheco felt sure that his own party headed by the licenciado de Cuidad Rodrigo would triumph. The adhesion of Zamora was certain because of the attitude of Alfonso de Valencia alcalde of its fortress and Toro would be delivered by Juan de Ulloa.¹

Unfortunately for the Portuguese and the rebel Castilian nobles most important Castilian towns either raised banners immediately in favour of Ferdinand and Isabella, were reconciled almost immediately, or contained such strong loyalist factions as to make them extremely dangerous for the rebels. While Segovia, Avila, Sepulveda, Valladolid and Tordesillas declared themselves loyal immediately Zamora was at first prevented from doing so by the opposition of the party headed by Juan de Acuña. The true feelings of its citizens were shown somewhat later when Juan de Porras and other loyalists came to Segovia to pledge the city's support to the Queen.² Although Zamora fell to Alfonso's

1. Palencia, op. cit., pp.344-345.

2. Azcona, op. cit., p.221.

forces a few months later the existence of a very strong loyalist party within the city was confirmed time and time again by the execution of citizens accused of plotting to let the Castilian army pass through the city walls.¹

Burgos also remained in the loyalist camp despite the open opposition of the Castle and its bishop because of several timely mercedes and confirmations issued by the royal Chancery. On 23 March 1475 all the traditional privileges of the city were confirmed.² On the same day the jurisdiction of the Adelantado of Castile was restricted because of a complaint by city officials that he had been interfering with the city's jurisdiction over the towns of its district. The royal order affirmed that:

The aforesaid Adelantado do not have the right to enter, nor execute his office in any of the cities, towns or places of the province of Castile ... especially in the city of Burgos and in its district where neither you nor your lieutenant can exercise nor are in the practice of exercising the said office.³

Steps were also taken to insure the return of municipal property that had been seized by the local nobility during the previous reign.⁴

As in the case of Burgos, prompt action by the crown in confirming

1. Palencia, op. cit., pp.92-93.

2. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 59-24, in Azcona, p.235.

3. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 59-88:

vos el dicho adelantado mayor no tienes derecho de entrar ny poner meryno ny execucion de vuestro oficio en las merindades de la dicha provincia de Castilla, especialmente en la cibdad de Burgos e en su merindad e alhoz e distrito donde por vos ni por vuestras lugartenintes no podeys; ni estays en costumbre de exercer el dicho oficio.

4. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 23 March 1475 (no folio).

its privileges sufficed to keep Toledo in the loyalist camp. Above all, the crown made sure to confirm the general pardon conceded by Henry to the city on 16 June 1468, which had served as the instrument of settlement for the violent conflict between conversos and Old Christians and restored peace to the city.¹ Valladolid was also confirmed in its municipal privileges and on 20 April 1475 its officials were confirmed in their exemption from quartering.²

The prompt and successful measures taken to conciliate the towns and bring them firmly into the loyalist camp had almost immediate repercussions on the rebels because of the overwhelming financial and military support given to Ferdinand and Isabella by the city of Burgos during the siege of Burgos castle. An account made up by the city council in 1494, which details the cost of the siege to the city lists some 37,510,000 maravedís as the amount contributed by the city to the support of the crown from June 1474 to the end of the siege. This figure included such items as 3,000,000 in salary lost by persons who left their jobs to help in the siege lines, a 2,000,000 maravedí servicio given to the crown during the siege, 120,000 given to the man who commanded municipal forces, 1,300,000 for the cost of building siege engines, and a total of 24,200,000 maravedís lost through the total destruction of the "Calle de las Armas" by artillery fire from

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1. E. Benito Ruano, Toledo en el siglo XV, (Madrid, 1961) p.287.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Valladolid, legajo 5 No. 17, in Cuadernos de la Catedra de Paleografía y Diplomática, I ed. Filemon Arranz, (Valladolid, 1953), p.75.

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both sides.¹

Knights from Seville also gave a good account of themselves in the opening few months of the war. Although at first made hesitant by their fear of Alfonso's advancing army, they passed to the attack after the change of direction which took the Portuguese into the territory of the friendly Dukes of Plasencia. Beginning with small incursions into Portugal with the object of stealing livestock and raiding farms the various armed bands soon coalesced into a force powerful enough to capture the fortress of Nodar deep inside Portuguese territory on 6 June 1475. This action changed the balance of border defences by making secure certain unfortified Castilian towns that had been frequently attacked by the Portuguese; while, at the same time, exposing "four or five" Portuguese towns to daily raids from Castile. Furthermore, as a direct consequence of this victory, the Portuguese garrisons of Mora, Moron and Moncaray were forced to extend their protection to all the frontier towns that had been left without troops of their own.² To complicate further the task of the Portuguese command, the successful troops from Seville were soon joined by others from the city and set out on a raid aimed at destroying crops in the vicinity of the castle of Moron. There, they were able to inflict a sharp defeat on a Portuguese force which had sallied from the castle to oppose them.³

With the end of fighting in Burgos and the defeat of the Portuguese

1. Archivo Municipal de Burgos, Actas Capitulares, 1480, f.24.

2. Palencia, op. cit., p.423.

3. Palencia, op. cit., p.426.

at Paleagonzalo the first part of the war was over and the crown felt strong enough to take the first step in reorganizing the base of monarchical power. This was the setting up, at the Cortes of Madrigal (27 April 1476), of the so-called Santa Hermandad or brotherhood of the cities and towns of Castile that was to embrace royal and señorial possessions alike in one national system.

The Hermandad or brotherhood of towns for mutual defence had roots far back in the history of mediaeval Castile. The first major organisation of this type can be traced to the time of the revolt of Prince Sancho against his father Alonso X in 1282.¹ This organization embraced all the major cities of the kingdom except for Seville and Murcia.

In organization, the Hermandad of 1282 was elementary. Although provision was made for a Junta or executive body to decide common policy, its functions were not specified. Hermandad judicial officers were not to have powers exceeding those of the municipalities; nor were there any special obligations on the members that would cause them to stay together. However, one clause did reveal the essential nature of the Hermandad as an organization meant exclusively for the protection and enhancement of the political power of the cities. This clause provided the death penalty for anyone bringing letters from either the Prince or the King in which the dissolution of the Hermandad was ordered.²

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1. Luis Suarez Fernandez, "Evolución histórica de las hermandades castellanas", Cuadernos de Historia de Espana, XVI (1951), 14.
 2. Luis Suarez Fernandez, "Evolución histórica de las hermandades castellanas", Cuadernos de Historia de Espana, XVI (1951), 16.

Indeed, even after the accession of Sancho as Sancho IV in 1284, the Hermidad continued its existence until, faced with his intense opposition and undermined by its own lack of cohesion, it submitted to his direct order and dissolved itself later that same year.¹ The Hermidad of 1282, which was called into being by Prince Sancho as a way of making good his rebellion against his father, had shown disturbing tendencies to permanence and resistance to royal authority. Thus, the very monarch who, as Prince, created the first national Hermidad in order to challenge constituted authority now had to suppress it in order to preserve his own.

During the next period of Hermidad formation, 1295-1317, the organization not only succeeded in reaching a much higher state of perfection and durability but also obtained, for a time, virtual co-government with the council of regency headed by Maria de Molina. The four most important Hermidades - those of Castile, Galicia, Leon and Toledo-Extremadura - set up definite meeting places for their Juntas and fixed a town for the location of the common treasury. They also began to make certain ordinances that encroached on royal authority in quite a serious way. The Hermidad of Castile stated that it would not authorize the payment of subsidies voted by the Cortes unless these were also agreed to by the entire Hermidad.² The Leonese body began claiming the right to assault the castle of any noble believed to be

1. Ibid., p.18.

2. Luis Suarez Fernandez, "Evolución histórica de las hermandades castellanas", Cuadernos de Historia de España, XVI (1951), 21.

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sheltering a man wanted by its judicial officers. The obligation to obey all letters carrying the common seal and to render five days of mutual assistance in case of need were also imposed on member towns of all the Hermandades.¹

Very little Hermandad activity, aside from the formation of local bodies to deal with criminal activities, can be seen during the reign of Fernando IV (1302-1313) as very few documents mentioning Hermandades appear for the period.² However, in 1315-1317, during the minority of Alfonso XI, they reappeared with an even higher level of organization than ever before. Their ordinances provided for two annual meetings instead of one as called for by previous Hermandades.³ Furthermore, two alcaldes or chief judicial officers of the Hermandad were to be selected in each associated town. They were given very clearly defined functions which included the prosecution of criminals, initiation of court cases against offenders, and the establishment of truces and settlement of disputes between member cities. As a tribute to the growing importance of the towns three hidalgos and three ordinary citizens (pecheros) were selected by the Hermandad to remain with the child-king and each of his tutors as permanent representatives of the Hermandad who would be ready to act in any case concerning it. As a further demonstration of its importance the Hermandad was able to obtain, at the Cortes of Carrion de los Condes, equal recognition of its letters

1. Ibid., p.26.

2. Ibid., p.28.

3. Ibid., p.29.

with those of the crown. Even local judicial officers were required to render assistance to officials of the Hermmandad when required. The Hermmandad of 1315 was not dissolved until 1325 when another strong and active ruler, Alfonso XI (who reached his majority in that year), had it disbanded at the Cortes of Valladolid.

The coming of the Trastamara inaugurated a period of great difficulty for the Hermmandad. With the sole exception of an emergency organization inspired by the invasion of forces under the command of the Duke of Lancaster and the Master of Avis in 1386 the Hermmandad no longer existed as a national organization. Instead, local or regional Hermmandades like the "Hermmandad Vieja de Toledo" were formed to deal with purely local problems. This development was encouraged by the monarchy not only because it condemned the Hermmandad to political impotence but also because the security of inaccessible parts of the country was assured. The monarch also found these local Hermmandades a useful source of trained troops as Alfonso himself discovered when he obtained some 120 ballesteros from the "Hermmandad Vieja de Toledo" in 1345.¹

During the reign of Henry IV Hermmandades were, as we have seen, spontaneous expressions of support for a monarchy made ineffective by the weakness of the monarch and the stubborn opposition of the nobility. The Hermmandad of 1465-1469, which had so willingly pledged its support to the monarch, marked a considerable advance in organization over

1. Luis Suarez Fernandes, "Evolución histórica de las hermandades castellanas", Cuadernos de Historia de Espana, XVI (1951), 38.

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previous Hermendades. Its organizational framework, as constituted at the Junta of Castronuno, provided for eight provisional captains under a single leader and a formal method of working out communal assessments. By 1469, however, internal divisions fomented by the nobles were so strong that some of the representatives at the Cortes of Ocana called for an audit to be made in Hermendad accounts. This mutual distrust was indicative of a general malaise which later manifested itself in the break-up of the large Hermendad into many smaller ones with purely local policing responsibilities:

each city and town would elect, from time to time, two good men who would ride out accompanied by armed troops to castigate evildoers. ¹

In organization, the Hermendad set up by Ferdinand and Isabella at the Cortes of Madrigal cannot be termed more than an elaboration and extension of those of the High Middle Ages. It was a national organization set up to proceed against highwaymen, arsonists and robbers, and judge and execute them. Each place of more than forty families was to elect two justices and a proportionate number of mounted troops was to be provided in order to pursue criminals for five leagues until the next contingent of cavalry could take over. One of the judicial officers was to represent the caballeros and escuderos of the town and the other was to come from the pecheros.²

A strong-box was to be provided in each town to hold the funds

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1. Enriquez del Castillo, Crónica de Enrique IV, BAE 70, in Suárez Fernandes, "Evolución histórica", p.44.
 2. Azcona, op. cit., p.335.

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that had been collected for payment to the provincial treasury. These funds could be raised either by the imposition of a sisa, by dividing the sum up among the pecheros, or even by direct payment out of the propios (municipal property and income from local taxes).

Meetings were to take place once a year at the seat of each territorial division be it province, merindad or partido. The subjects for discussion at these meetings were pending litigation, disagreements among the members, and all other matters concerning "the state of the said hermandad". As if afraid of a possible recrudescence of the organization's traditionally independent spirit the monarchs specifically ordered that these discussions were:

not to be extended further than that contained in this our letter because we order you to observe the said ordinances here incorporated and guard and complete them in their entirety. 1

Looking only at the above regulations, it is easy to say, with Luis Suarez Fernandez, that the "Catholic Kings" were not innovators in any way, merely having inherited and revived mediaeval institutions. However, it is far less easy to concur in his opinion as to the course the institutional history of the Hermandad had followed during the Middle Ages - or indeed see its use under the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella as the logical culmination of it. According to Suárez Fernandez:

From being a league of cities instituted in a moment of vital economic and political expansion of the municipalities it had passed slowly to constitute a body of municipal police. In this aspect Isabella and Ferdinand did not do more than

1. Cortes de los antiguos reinos de Leon y Castilla, RAH IV (Madrid, 1882) in Suárez Fernandez, "Evolución histórica", pp. 43-44.

terminate a process that had evolved over many years. 1

The history of the development of the Hermandad that he himself presents would seem to contradict his own conclusions. We have seen that, right from the beginning, the Hermandades, whether organized from above or from below, had attempted to gain political power for the towns. For this reason they had to be dissolved repeatedly by Castilian monarchs from Sancho IV to Alfonso XI. As for the Hermandades formed during the reign of Henry IV, they too organized themselves for political purposes far wider than simply policing the countryside. The Junta of Burgos, as has already been noted, ranged itself squarely with the monarchy against the Princes and their collaborators. This was plainly stated as the *santo proposito* of the organization which said that it would dedicate itself to "the restoration and conservation of the crown". Coming as it did immediately after the death of Prince Alonso, at a time of grave danger to the monarchy, its promise of political and military support could not but tip the balance in Henry's favour.

Nor can it be doubted that the new Santa Hermandad of Ferdinand and Isabella had a high political and military objective and was neither in the beginning nor at any time thereafter meant to be solely a country constabulary. Of course, the ordinances approved by Ferdinand and Isabella mention only that the new Hermandad was to be responsible for the suppression of various crimes such as assault on the highways, robbery, murder or assault, the taking of prisoners without royal

1. Suárez Fernandez, "Evolución histórica", p.45.

authority, or the burning of houses and crops. Yet we know that this was precisely the way opposing nobles made war on one another's territory. Pedro Fajardo, for example was specifically allowed, by royal license, to:

make war and all the evil and harm that you can do the said Marquis of Villena and to all of his followers ... you can wound and kill freely, without penalty or calumny and capture people on your own authority and keep them in prison. 1

There can be no doubt that in specifying the actions commonly undertaken by armies in fifteenth-century war as those over which the new Hermandad was to have authority, Ferdinand and Isabella were thinking of using it against those pro-Portuguese Castilian nobles still remaining in the field against them and ultimately as a way of reducing their own dependence on the upper nobility for military support. The original representatives at the Cortes of Madrigal clearly indicates this pre-occupation with the activities of the remaining pro-Portuguese nobles because the crimes to be dealt with by the Hermandad were attributed to "the favour that some knights, rebels and disloyal enemies of the country had given to the Portuguese invasion".²

From almost its very inception the new Hermandad was employed to fight the rebel nobles. This first occurred when the organization sent troops to aid in the siege of Navas del Rey, a fortress then held by the rebel Adelantado of Galicia Fernando de Pareja.³ Then, in 1477, units drawn from the Hermandad participated in the siege of the fortresses of

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 23 May 1475, in Azcona, p.280.

2. Cortes de los antiguos Reinos de Leon y Castilla, RAH IV (Madrid, 1882), pp.2-3.

3. Valera, op. cit., p.90.

Siete Inglesias, Cubillos, Castronuno, and Cantalapiedra. Part of the troops engaged in the siege were led by the man who was later chosen to become overall commander of the Santa Hermandad, Alfonso de Aragon.¹

The most significant intervention of the Hermandad on the side of the crown was its use during the second war of the Marquisate of Villena beginning in January 1479. Alfonso de Aragon, then captaining Hermandad forces, joined Jorge Manrique and Pedro Ruiz de Alarcon in the attempt to reduce the Marquis's remaining possessions. However, the failure of the Hermandades of Toledo, Cuenca and Soria to send their quota of troops placed the whole royal army in danger and induced the crown to make peace with the Marquis.²

Following the establishment of the Hermandad in 1476 the relationship between the crown and the cities became stronger. The cities, particularly those of Andalusia, began to send large contingents to swell royal forces during 1477-1479. Jerez de la Frontera sent a large number of troops under the command of its corregidor Juan de Robles to help in the siege of Utrera in November 1477, while Seville and Cordoba sent forces to help in the siege of Villena.³

In return for this valuable support the Andalusian cities were given a number of very important concessions. Seville was granted the right to collect the corretaje a tax that would be used to pay for the

1. Pulgar, op. cit., p.294.

2. Juan Torres Fontes, "La Conquista", p.107.

3. Andres Bernaldez, Historia de los Reyes Catolicos D. Fernando y Doña Isabel, (Seville, 1870), p.91.

Hernandad during the first three years and then to pertain to the city.¹

At the same time, Jerez secured a reduction in the number of francos del Alcazar from 100 to 30.²

Another type of concession secured by the Andalusian cities and one which made a considerable difference to both their power and independence from crown and nobility alike, was the actual possession of their own alcazares or municipal defences. Provision for the turning to municipal control of the fortresses of Prexinal, ^Aroche, Lebrixa, Villanueva Montegil and Triana was first made on 13 September 1477. They were to be given to regidores of Seville after a six-month transition period during which their owner, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, was obliged to permit their occupation by the crown.³ On 12 October 1478 the Duke was given some 400,000 maravedís in juro as compensation for his loss. At the same time, he promised to resign "for myself and for my heirs any and all rights to the tenancy of the said fortresses".⁴

In another agreement, signed on 29 October 1478, Alfonso de Aguilar, lord of the Cordovan fortress of Hornachuelos, bound himself to give control of it to the veintiquatro Juan de Briones who was to hold it for the city. Alfonso was made to promise that he would not obstruct the transfer by causing its present alcalde Alonso de Castillo to refuse to

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 9 July 1478, f.83.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1489, ffs.33v-34. The francos were a group of wealthy citizens responsible for the upkeep of municipal fortifications. They were exempted from paying local taxes and were under the direct control of the corregidor.

3. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11 - 40.

4. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11 - 38.

surrender the castle.¹

On 12 November 1478 a second agreement encompassing all remaining Cordovan fortresses was reached with Alfonso. This provided that he surrender all the fortresses he then held in return for re-payment of the monies he had spent on repairs and on settling the amount outstanding on his salary as tenant:

it is our order that you D. Alfonso de Aguilar deliver the Cordovan fortresses that you hold to the persons that the said city has named for this and between you and the city it was agreed that you had to be paid all that you were owed for the tenancy. 2

The same contract that provided for the rendition of Sevillian fortresses by the Duke of Medina Sidonia also provided for the surrender of the alcazares of Jerez de la Frontera by his rival Rodrigo Ponce de Leon Marquis of Cadiz. In fact the coming into effect of the Duke's agreement concerning Seville was made to depend on the Marquis's surrender, within six months, of the alcazar and the fortresses of Alcala de Guadaira and Constantina so that the Queen could give them to regidores of the city.³

Baeza also was able to gain possession of some of its most important fortresses. On 21 February 1477 Juan de Benavedys alcalde of Linares,

1. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11-102.

2. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11-99:

es nuestro mandado que vos don Alfon cuya es la casa de aguylar entregase las fortalezas que teneya de la cibdad de cordova e su tierra a las personas que la dicha para ello han nombrado, e entre vos e la dicha cibdad fue asentado que vos ovyese de ser pagado todo lo que vos hera devydo de tenencia.

3. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11-40.

Martin Ceron of Loporo and Fernan Sanchez de la Ravya master of the castle of Ras were ordered to hand their charges over to municipal officials without regard for any "letters we have given you in order to hold the said fortresses".¹

This period in which military co-operation between the crown and the municipalities was strengthened also saw the development of closer relations between the crown and the urban governing class. A number of important steps were taken by the crown in order to reward this class for its strong support of the Hermendad and other measures. The merced of the cambios (money-changing) of Cordoba, long held by Alfonso de Aguilar, was revoked on petition of the municipal council on 13 November 1478.² And, when in the same year, food scarcity and high prices caused the poor of Jerez to riot and attack the houses of the rich the city's chief judicial officer Juan de Robles was ordered to suppress them:

relation has been made to me that because of the scarcity some persons of the said city have made and caused scandals and movements against rich persons ... I order you that if you find an organization of people either from the lands of the said city or from other places for the above-mentioned then make them disperse and order them on my behalf to return home.³

Furthermore, the heavy demands made on municipal finances made by

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1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 21 February 1477, f.310.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 13 November 1478, f.250.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 16 November 1478, f.116:
a my es fecha relacion que por caubsa de la carestia del tiempo algunos personas vecinos de la dicha cibdad han fecho e causado algunos escandalos e movimientos contra algunas personas ricas ... Vos mando que sy en ella fallaredes algund allegamyento de gentes asy de la tierra de la dicha cibdad como de otros partes para lo suso dicho lo fagades luego derramar e les mandeyes de my parte que leugo se buelva a sus casas.

the civil war, the Hermidad and various special subsidies offered the urban patriciate opportunities to improve their holdings. In Burgos, the financial crisis of 1478, caused in part by heavy demands from the Hermidad (more than 3,000,000 maravedís), forced the city council to throw open 71,000 in vitiary mercedes to be changed to juro de heredad. Those who took advantage of this offer included the escribano mayor Fernando de Cuevas-Ruynos (10,000 maravedís) and his wife Beatris de Miranda (5,000 maravedís), Garcia Martines de Lerma-regidor (15,000), and his son.¹

After the peace of Alcacovas was ratified its provisions calling for the destruction of newly built frontier castles, the pardoning of Castilians who fought with the King of Portugal, and the entry of Juana in the monastery of Santa Clara were completed, Ferdinand and Isabella felt strong enough to call for a Cortes that would swear allegiance to their son Juan as heir to the throne of Castile. The great Cortes of Toledo held in September 1480 was the most important to be called during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella. A great number of matters bearing directly on public administration were decided at this Cortes, particularly with reference to the new royal council and its powers and to judicial administration. However, the aspect of Cortes legislation that will concern us here is that relating to the towns. It is in this legislation that we see the crown's attempt to satisfy some of the most pressing demands of the municipalities as well as its efforts to control and

1. Archivo Municipal de Burgos, Actas Capitulares, 23 April 1478, f.31.

correct some of the worst abuses of municipal administration.

That the petitions presented to the crown by municipal procuradores (representatives) would, to a large degree, reflect the desires of the urban governing class is shown by the number of town officials acting as representatives as well as by the fact that all procuradores were chosen by the city councils. Burgos sent two of its alcaldes, Andres de Ribera and Francisco de Macuelo. For Toledo its corregidor Gomes Manrique and a jurado were sent. The city of Avila was represented by Diego de Agyla, a regidor, and Juan Chacon, Segovia by two regidores: Luis de Mexia and Rodrigo de Penalosa; Soria sent its alcalde, Goncalo de Beteca, who was also a regidor, and another regidor, Fernando de Barrio Nuevo. Seville sent a jurado, Francisco de Alfaro, and a regidor, the commander Fernand Arias de Sayavedra. Other officials sent by cities were Pedro Nunes de Godoy, regidor, sent by Cordoba, Juan Ortega de Avyles, and the licenciado Cascales, regidores sent from Murcia, Pedro de Barrientos from Cuenca, Pedro Peres de Sotomayor, regidor of Guadalajara, and Luis de Alcala, regidor of Madrid.

The representatives, two from each of eighteen cities, received heavy cash payments from the crown for their attendance. These payments ranged from 75,000 maravedís given to Murcia's licenciado, Cascales, to the 150,000 maravedís given to Andres de Ribera and Rodrigo de Ulloa, who was also a royal contador mayor. Aside from these direct payments, some 185,000 maravedís were paid out in clerical expenses.¹

1. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 69-20.

Liberal cash payments handed to the procuradores may have been responsible for the passage of laws designed to control or eliminate some of the worst longstanding abuses of municipal government. We shall see later the way in which these laws were openly flouted by municipal administrations with the tacit agreement of the crown, but also how they served as the rallying point for all those opposed to oligarchial rule.

Such was to be the fate of the law that was passed to prohibit collusion between members of the town council (cabildo), through one enjoying the hospitality of the other:

We order that no alcalde nor regidor nor jurado nor any other person who has a vote in the city council be prohibited from living with another person who has a vote in the same city council under penalty of loss of his office. 1

Collusion between voting members of the city council was to continue in various ways despite this prohibition and others passed at the same Cortes designed to stop it. One favourite tactic was the holding of unannounced meetings meant to exclude certain voting members in order to pass measures favourable to certain others. In the very same year of the Cortes one group of Jerez regidores complained:

that some meetings are held in this city in order to make and order and provide certain things convenient to certain private persons on days that are not assigned for council meetings. 2

1. Cortes, IV, op. cit., p.151.

2. A.M. Jerez de la Frontera: Actas Capitulares, 31 October 1480:
E luego los dichos senores dixieron que algunas cabildos se fasen en esta cibdad en los dias estraordinarios que non son dias asygnados para cabildo ... para faser e proveer algunas cosas que a personas syngulares conviene.

Furthermore, complaints about members of the cabildo living with caballeros and city officials were very common throughout the years 1480-1492.¹

Another law which provided for a thirty day settlement of boundary disputes recorded that:

some councils from others and some knights and other persons, unjustly and unduly take and occupy the places and jurisdictions and boundaries and pasture and poultry yards of the places next to their property and the worst is that the same natives and householders of the cities and towns take and occupy the lands around them. 2

Improved procedures for settling the disputes that this practice gave rise to were introduced which not only provided for judgement of claims within thirty days but also stated that the judge's award was to be carried into effect even if an appeal to a higher court was being heard. Despite this reform, the drawn out litigation between cities like Jerez de la Frontera and its neighbours Arcos de la Frontera, Alcala de Henares, Rota, Puerto Real, and others is a prominent feature of the Actas Capitulares of that city. For Jerez, the new law had little effectiveness in reducing either its complaints of encroachments or the time and expense of litigation. Furthermore, the constant and increasing assumption of common lands and other rights by regidores, jurados and their families throughout the reign testifies to their absolute unwillingness to obey laws that went against their interests or desires.³

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1. See A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, for references. This series of documents can be easily consulted for 1475-1492 because it has a published catalogue.
 2. Cortes, op. cit., p.155.
 3. See Actas Capitulares of Jerez de la Frontera, 7 July 1483 for the granting of local salt making facilities to cabildo members. See the Actas of Murcia for assumption of land in the Campo de Cartegena by regidores, also A.G. Simancas, 5 May 1491, f.117.

A law was also passed which revoked all mercedes issued by the two previous rulers, Juan II and Henry IV, and by Ferdinand and Isabella themselves that permitted the recipient to renounce his office in municipal administration to his son or to another person named by him:

We revoke and declare to be of no value and effect all letters and privileges that have not yet been carried into effect, given to whatever persons of whatever eminence, that allow them to renounce any of their offices to their sons or grandsons or nephews or any person that they choose. ¹

The firm language used in this law was no guarantee of its being carried into effect. Throughout the reign the law was only applied in the sense that the crown would intervene to ratify the passing on or resignation of municipal offices. The hereditary principle, established in the previous century, was never challenged. ²

In return for passing these laws the towns and their governing class succeeded in obtaining legislation that was directly in their interest. One of the most important of these laws concerned the suspension of the powers of alcaldes of the Adelantado of Castile. The suspension was to remain in force until an investigation into the complaints that had been made about them was concluded. ³

At the same time a true reform of the corrupt mercado franco system was avoided. These free markets were usually granted on one or two days of the week during which merchants were not required to pay the

1. Cortes, IV, op. cit., p.162.

2. See the Registro General del Sello for the inheritance of municipal posts, eg. 26 April 1483.

3. Cortes, IV, op. cit. p.148.

alcavala. It was alleged that the mercado franco worked to the detriment of the poor because they could not fill their needs except on free market days. Merchants would hold back their goods until the day of the free market, thereby not only causing great inconvenience to those wishing to purchase on the other days but also causing great loss to the royal treasury.¹

However, despite prejudice to the poor and loss to the royal rents, a law made by Henry IV which suppressed the free markets could not be put into effect since it had been made during the movements of his reign. Although an investigation was ordered into the workings of the free markets, this was merely an excuse for inaction and the granting of these privileges went on unabated throughout the reign.

Two other laws were passed that were directly favourable to the urban patriciate. The first of these called for the rigorous separation of Jews and Moors from the Christian population. This was to be done by actual movement of the Jews from their homes spread all over the city into specially designated juderías:

We order that all the Jews and Moors of all and whatever cities and towns and places of these our kingdoms whether they are of the royal domain or señorios have their juderías and morerías distinct and separated and that the Jews and Moors do not live mixed with the Christians nor have districts with them, which we order done and completed within two years.

Special crown officers were to be sent to all the towns in order to see that this law was carried out. These men were to act as surveyors allocating the places within the town where the Jews were to live and

1. Cortes, IV, op. cit., p.189.

seeing that the new Ghetto included space for a new synagogue to replace the ones left in the Christian quarter:

In order to accomplish this we presently intend to name trustworthy persons in order to make the said partition, indicating the plots and places where they can live and carry on their occupations conveniently. And if in the places where they are put they do not have synagogues we order the persons we have sent to indicate plots so that they may have synagogues. 1

The popularity of this law with the urban governing class is shown by the ready acceptance of large scale population changes imposed by the new law, despite the inconvenience they caused the towns. This law was quickly put into effect while other laws passed at the Cortes, such as the one prohibiting the inheritance of municipal positions, were simply ignored. These laws relating to municipal reform were not in the interests of the urban patriciate while segregation of the Jews was one of the things closest to their hearts during the period 1477-1483. A detailed examination of this law and its operation in various Castilian cities (included in Chapter Eight) will reveal much about the attitude of the urban patriciate toward the Jews.

Finally, another law was passed which was of vital importance to the urban patriciate and to the upper and lower nobility generally. This was the projected reform of mercedes granted from 1464. In the course of time this measure has become such an important part of the mistaken appreciation of the anti-noble policy followed by Ferdinand and Isabella prevalent today that it deserves separate treatment. Not

1. Cortes, IV, op. cit., p.149.

only must accepted opinion about its original intent be carefully reconsidered in the light of new evidence but it must also be related to a reconsideration of the main lines of monarchical policy as it developed after the war of succession.

If the period 1475-1476 can be considered a continuation of the reign of Henry IV, the formation of the Hernandad and the close relations between the monarchy and the towns built up from 1476 to 1480 was the precursor of a vital change in the basis of monarchical power. No longer was the crown entirely dependent on the upper nobility. Its alliance with the towns had already allowed it sufficient freedom of action to renegue mercedes to nobles and mete out severe punishment to rebels like Alonso Carillo and the Marquis of Villena. In just a few years the nobility were to be entirely displaced at the political centre of Castile by the crowns' new allies the urban governing class.

CHAPTER III

RELATIONS WITH THE NOBILITY AFTER THE PORTUGUESE WAR

The great reform of mercedes known as the declaratorias of Toledo is one of the most important components of the so-called "anti-noble" policy of Ferdinand and Isabella as it is understood - or misunderstood - by modern historians. Diego Clemencín in his Elogio a la Reina Católica Doña Isabel quotes approvingly the names of the most important nobles in Castile who surrendered large percentages of their merced for inclusion in the royal treasury. These nobles included the Admiral of Castile, Alonso de Aguilar, with a loss of 5,000; Andres de Cabrera and Beatriz de Bobadilla, who lost 302,000; and the Duke of Medina Sidonia and Marquis of Cadiz who respectively lost 180,000 and 573,000 maravedís. At the same time, the Duke of Alva, Don Gabriel de Toledo lost 575,000 maravedís and Pedro Fajardo 160,000.¹ No differentiation appears to have been made here between "rebels" like Alonso de Aguilar and "loyalists" like the Admiral. This would seem to bear out Azcona's contention that the reform was a "thrust at the noble oligarchy" generally, and a net increase in the power of the crown.² For Azcona, the reform represents the crown's last great move in the process of suppression of the feudal nobility "not realized perhaps without the use of some force". It must be called the fruit of victory in the civil war; a victory not over the King of Portugal and his Castilian allies, i.e. one section of the

1. Clemencín, op. cit., pp.147-148.

2. Azcona, op. cit., p.359.

nobility, but over the entire estate and its attempt to gain power at the expense of the crown. Due to the reform:

The legislation of a civil war and a social revolution, from which Isabel must have had harsh memories, was not in vain. 1

In his recent detailed study of the "Libro de las declaratorias"

A. Matilla Tascon gives us a total of 62,920,552 maravedís as the amount in the hands of merced holders before the great reform and some 32,171,878 maravedís after it had been effected. This amounts to a net reduction in mercedes outstanding of some 51 per cent.²

Contemporaries, however, did not view the great reform of 1480 in the same way as Azcona, Clemencín, Prescott or other modern historians have done. Pulgar mentions nothing about its being a move against the nobility - and indeed they were called in to discuss it and give their opinions on it when the Queen's own council was hopelessly divided. Far from condemning and opposing the project, as one would expect if it was aimed directly against them, they enthusiastically agreed to the reform:

All agreed that the rents and the royal patrimony that were alienated by the immense gifts that were made from it must be restored and reduced in due form. 3

And, when a reduction in mercedes amounting to "over 30,000,000" was decided upon, Pulgar records that although some "were content and many others were discontented they all suffered it, each considering how he

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.359.

2. A. Matilla Tascon, Declaratorias de los Reyes Catolicos sobre reduccion de juros y otras mercedes, (Madrid, 1952), p.17.

3. Pulgar, op. cit., p.418.

had had these mercedes with such facility and to the dissolution of the royal patrimony".¹ They agreed with the municipal procuradores that it was necessary to restore the royal patrimony so that the crown could "live of its own" and not have to "impose other tributes and impositions on the Kingdom".²

The ready acceptance of extensive merced reduction by those to be most directly affected would seem to argue powerfully against Azcona's contention that the reform was originally conceived of as a "thrust at the noble oligarchy". If it had been so conceived, not only would it never have received the approval of the nobles when their votes were called for, but it would probably have caused recrudescence of the civil war, this time with the entire noble estate ranged against the crown. If this had occurred there is no doubt that despite the loyalty of the Hermandad the crown would have been beaten. Hermandad intervention in the war of the Marquisate of Villena had been ineffectual and boded ill for its use in a more general conflict. Furthermore, with its rents reduced to 27,415,626 maravedís in 1477,³ with the failure to take over the military orders, and with heavy debts still outstanding on Church plate,⁴ the crown's financial position was far too poor to permit it to re-open hostilities.

Therefore, if Azcona's understanding of the reform proposed at

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1. Pulgar, op. cit., p.421.
 2. Ibid., p.417.
 3. Clemencín, op. cit., p.157.
 4. Azcona, op. cit., p.266.

Toledo is defective are we to accept Pulgar's echoing of the municipal procuradores reasons for demanding it:- that the recovery of alienated rents would enable the crown to dispense with the imposition of new taxes? Once again it is difficult to believe in the generosity of the procuradores or the nobles who later concurred in their reasoning. Furthermore, judging from the future management of the royal exchequer, the monarchs themselves could not have accepted such a goal as policy in 1480. Throughout their reign they demanded and received heavy subsidies and converted them into a new kind of permanent tax. They were also relentless searchers for new sources of revenue, in ways that will be described later, and missed no opportunity to raise the amount collected from more traditional sources.

Fortunately, Pulgar himself gives us an indication of the real nature of the procuradores demands for reform of mercedes. In commenting on the way in which Henry IV would grant mercedes first to one party and then to the other during the Alfonsine war, he says that the result of this was that "everyone had the merced and not the possession". The meaning of this remark is made more specific somewhat later in the Chronicle when Pulgar frankly disclosed that because of the heavy granting of mercedes during the previous reigns:

the largest number of the mercedes of maravedís of juro de heredad issued were in such bad repute that for 1,000 mercedes in money they would give 1,000 maravedís in rent of juro de heredad.

Thus the marking down of royal paper - or mercedes, which were normally sold at prices ranging from 10,000 to 14,000 maravedís per 1,000 in juro - had proceeded so far that their value to both crown and purchaser had

been lost. The crown could no longer use its most important credit instrument and the merced holder saw his investment reduced in value by at least 90 per cent. Things had become so bad that "they were selling blank albales of King Henry to anyone who wanted to buy them cheaply".¹

The reasons for this drop in the value of crown securities were certainly to be found in the lack of confidence in government and the over-issue of mercedes many of which would possibly have been issued on the same rent. There was, however, another more important reason for this decline to be found in a change in the auditing procedure followed by the treasury with regard to the account books of tax-farmers (the arrendadores).

In the reign of Juan II tax-farmers were obliged to render account to their superiors, the contadores mayores, of all payments to be made from their rent. The special privilege that would enable the arrendador to complete his two year contract would be issued only after approval of his account by the contador mayor. As he had already advanced money to the treasury and could not collect it unless he collected the rent, it would be in his interest to effect all payments and prove that he had done so by obtaining receipts which he could then present at the time of the audit.²

This system of auditing account books ended early in the reign of Henry IV. According to the procuradores at Ocaña the tax-farmer was now required only to present a general summary of his payments called

1. Pulgar, op. cit., p.416.

2. Cortes, op. cit., p.71.

the "libro de las relaciones" instead of the receipts. The contadores mayores would accept these "libros de las relaciones" and the suspension of merced payments made by the tax-farmers listed in them without making any further inquiries or seeking proof that the suspension was justified:

and your highness knows that in the time of the said King Juan, your father, it was always the custom that the said arrendadores and rrecaudadores either at the end of each year of the said renting or at least in the first third of the following year would render their accounts to the said "contadores mayores de quantas" and were not given authorization by the contadores mayores to collect for the coming year until they had rendered their accounts for the past year. Some persons in the life of the said King Henry, your brother, in order to attract the business of his treasury to themselves ... did not want to give the charges and receipts to the contadores de cuentas as was habitual ... and now we see that they only take the accounts of the arrendadores and rrecaudadores ... by the books of relaciones and from these your contadores mayores take suspensions, and thus the charges remain without payment and without investigating the said suspensions. 1

The result of not having a follow up investigation of the data presented in the libros de relaciones was that many merced holders simply were not paid:

The results of this are that many Churches and Monasteries and other persons who can ill afford it are greatly aggrieved and lose what is theirs. 2

Behind the concern expressed by the procuradores of the cities, the Clergy and nobles for the royal patrimony and the "Churches", "Monasteries" and "private persons" who could "ill afford" to lose the value of their mercedes was anger at the tax-farmers who used libros de relaciones to deceive or connive with their superiors in order to avoid

1. Cortes, op. cit., p.71.

2. Ibid.

payment of mercedes owing on their rent.

The names of many merced holders who were never paid or only partially paid during the reign of Henry IV comes from investigations carried out after merced holders had declared their holdings for inclusion in the official "libro de las declaraciones". Taking the years 1477, 1478 and 1479 as trial years, the investigations were intended to show whether the holders had realized something on their investments. Their results proved that in a great number of cases involving both large and small beneficiaries, the merced had either not been paid, been paid in part, or paid in only one of the three years.

Merced holders who were unable to realize anything during the trial years included Pedro Alvarez de Sotomayor with a 30,000 maravedí merced;¹ Alfonso de Medina with 5,000 maravedía in juro on the alcavala of Ubeda;² Maria Mendoza with 40,000;³ Gomez de Rojas with 20,000 on the alcavala of Baeza;⁴ and Michel de Mexica and Juan Correa de Velasco with 5,000 and 4,000 respectively in the merindad of Allende Ebro.⁵ Two of the most powerful noble houses in the Kingdom were not able to collect on some of their mercedes. Some 32,000 of a 140,000 merced on the rents of Salamanca held by Maria Enríquez the Duches of Alba had not been paid during the trial years.⁶ The family of the powerful Adelantado

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1. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla, 5-82.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-329.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-297.
 4. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-319.
 5. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 1-227.
 6. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-370.

of Murcia, Don Pedro Fajardo was also affected. His daughter Luysa had never collected anything on a privilege of 150,000 maravedís that he had given to her on 14 September 1482.¹ A new grant had also to be issued to Luis Lucas de Torres son of Constable Miguel Lucas in order to compensate him for his total loss of the same merced during the trial years.²

Another very common occurrence was the payment of all or part of a merced in only one out of the three trial years. A grant of 4,000 maravedís and 20 fanegas of grain on the rents of Tordesillas held by Isabel Garcia was only paid in 1479.³ Tristan de Zuniga had enjoyed payment of his grant of 10,000 from the rents of the Merindad of Campos only in 1477.⁴ A grant of 120,000 maravedís on the Alcavala of Toro held by the powerful contador mayor, Rodrigo de Ulloa had been shown on investigation to have only been paid in 1478.⁵ Another merced amounting to 5,400 in juro de heredad held by Juan Caraus was paid only in 1478,⁶ and some 33,500 on the alcavala of Baeza was collected by its owner Beatris de Valencia only in 1479.⁷ The great variety of rents cited and the range of cities and places affected indicates how common were these corrupt practices and lends weight to the complaints of the procuradores

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1. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-360.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-326.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-120.
 4. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-16.
 5. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla, 5-27.
 6. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-387.
 7. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-316.

at Toledo.

Thus, from the point of view of the municipal representatives who demanded it and the nobles who approved it, the great reform of mercedes was seen primarily as a way of restoring the value of their holdings. This must also have been a powerful incentive for the crown, for if the merced holding class regained its confidence in royal credit, extensive use could once again be made of the most important source of ready money.

That the monarchs tended, on the whole, to follow a conciliatory policy toward merced holders there is no doubt. This can be clearly seen in the application of rules set down for the suppression of mercedes. There were an appreciable number of these rules all handed to the Prior of Prado, Fernando de Talavera, who was to direct the investigations into titles of merced holders. Some of these, listed in a document entitled "carta de Declaracion e Pramatica Sancion sobre las Declaratorias de las Cortes de Toledo de 1480", were frequently violated in favour of merced holders by the monarchs themselves. Among others the regulations listed included a provision for permanent suppression of mercedes granted for the life of the holder - these mercedes were not to be passed to the purchaser's heirs. Another ordinance listed in the same document provided that all mercedes not declared within one year were to be suppressed without compensation; a third ordinance ordered the immediate confiscation of all mercedes granted on iron foundries.¹

According to a royal pragmatica issued on 6 April 1487, which

1. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla, 5-94.

discussed the results of the declaratorias in general terms, the monarchs themselves admitted having frequently set aside the rule pertaining to suppression of vituary mercedes after the death of the original holder:

we have favoured certain persons with some mercedes that by the said declaration made in the said city of Toledo, we ordered kept to be consumed after their demise. 1

The regulation providing for confiscation of all privileges on iron foundries probably never went into effect. Jean de Porras, the treasurer of Vizcaya, had made a speciality of tracking down illegal merced holders hoping thereby to collect a percentage of the confiscated amount. But, despite his best efforts at reporting violations, the crown responded far more to the complaints of merced holders about his work than to his reports. On 28 March 1489 he was ordered to make all necessary merced payments from iron foundries in the province of Vizcaya after merced holders had complained of his excessive zeal for the royal patrimony by refusing to pay the supposedly illegal mercedes.² Porras also turned up a large number of mercedes that had not been reported within a year of the making up of the Libro. These too were liable to be taken for the crown but here again new privileges were issued. On 13 December 1498,

1. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla, 5-75:

"avemos hecho merced a algunas personas de algunas mercedes que por la dicha declaracion que asi fizimos en la dicha cibdad de Toledo mandamos dexar para consumir despues de sus dias."

2. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla, 6-61:

"Sepades en como muchos vezes por parte de los nuestros vasallos e de otras personas e yglesias e monestarios que de nos tienen mercedes en el pedido e herrerias que son del cargoe de la nuestra thesoreria del nuestro senorito e condado de Vizcaya nos fue fecha relacion que avian rescibido grandes fatigas e costas en rescibir e cobrar de las lancas mareantes e vasallos e otras mercedes que de nos tienen."

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seventeen years after the deadline for merced declaration new privileges were given to twelve persons holding mercedes on the diesmo viejo and alcavala of foundries in Vizcaya, despite the fact that Porras had reported the illegality of their holdings.¹ By this action the crown had not only violated its decree for the confiscation of privileges not reported within one year after the declaratorias, but also the one pertaining to iron foundries. The lenient attitude taken by the monarchs toward mercedes not declared in 1480 not only reveals non-implementation of their own ordinances calling for suppression but also shows the incompleteness of response to the demand for presentation of all outstanding privileges. Those undeclared mercedes for which we have evidence represent only a small part of the 2,417,924 maravedís of por vida and 23,637,783 maravedís of juro de heredad given out by Henry IV between 1464-1474 whose owners' names or those of their heirs are not mentioned in the "libro de las Declaratorias". When these figures are added to the 62,920,552 already listed in the Libro the actual reduction falls from 51.6 per cent to 35.9 per cent.²

The relative leniency toward merced holders during the investigation into their titles was repeated in the second phase. These investigations were supposed to reveal, after inspection of the account books of tax-farmers for 1477-1479, if a merced could be paid out of the rent on which it had been situated. If the merced did not "fit" into its rent or if it had not been paid during the trial years 1477-1479 it was

1. A.C. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla, 6-61.

2. A.G. Simancas, Indice to Mercedes y Privilegios, legajos 1-112.

declared "consumed" for the treasury.

Although ostensibly directed against merced holders this investigatory phase was actually meant to answer the demands of the procuradores of Toledo for an audit of account books. Once concluded it was to have the effect of establishing the rights of merced holders when their grant had been approved for inclusion in the "libro de las declaratorias". Neither the rule authorizing the suppression of mercedes that did not "fit" into the rent upon which they were situated nor the one concerning those paid in only one of the three years of trial was enforced. Privileges were re-issued in all the previously mentioned cases of mercedes left unpaid during the trial years or paid in only one out of three.

There are also numerous examples of new privileges given to approved merced holders even though investigation revealed that their merced did not "fit" into the rent.¹ This was done because the results of investigations frequently suffered in various ways. In many areas the tax-farmers for 1477-1479 fled at the approach of the inspectors through fear of what their audit might reveal. This occurred particularly in the case of investigations arriving from the provinces of Seville and Cadiz, but also with those of other provinces, so that various mercedes owned by Alfonso de Fonseca, Lord of Coca, had to be re-issued to him despite the incompleteness of investigations from the city of Seville due to the flight of the arrendadores.² On 14 September 1482 Lucas de

1. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla, 5-32,82.

2. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-233.

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Torres was issued a new privilege on his 200,000 por vida merced even though all the arredadores menores for the relevant rents in the provinces of Seville, Baeza, Andujar, and Ubeda had fled.¹

Reliability of investigations also suffered from collusion between crown investigators and the tax-farmers. These freely offered bribes to the men sent from court and they were frequently accepted. This abuse was so widespread that on 29 September 1482 investigator Francisco de Cigales was sent out to look into charges that crown officials conducting enquiries into the account books of tax-farmers "had taken some maravedis more than their salary".²

Faced with bribery of many crown officials and with the general unreliability of the investigations due to the flight of many tax-farmers the monarchs resorted to re-issuing privileges even before investigations had arrived. This demonstrates even more forcefully their favourable attitude toward the merced holder during this stage of investigations. In one of these cases a privilege for some 40,000 in juro de heredad was re-issued to Maria de Mendoza despite the fact that the investigations from Cordoba where her rent was placed had not yet arrived.³

If the first phase of investigations connected with the making up of the "libro de las declaratorias" was intended to reduce mercedes the second phase was clearly aimed at assuring the approved merced holder that once his privilege was accepted for inclusion in the Libro the entire

1. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-326.

2. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 51 C 11.

3. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 15-297.

weight of the crown would be behind him when he came to collect from the local tax-farmer. Ideally, then, the great reform of 1480 appears to have been a compromise between crown and merced holder. The former acted to restore some part, although a very small part, of its alienated rents; the latter in return for surrendering a certain portion of its least desirable holdings were to put their trust in the crown to enforce collection of the remainder. This was the ideal. In practice both sides were to be bitterly disappointed with the results.

Many of the tax-farmers, quite undaunted by the new situation, developed a variety of responses to meet it and thus to continue their old practices. Firstly, as has already been noted, they bribed crown investigators or fled at their approach. Then, after the first shock was over, new methods were developed aimed at defrauding both newly approved merced holders and the Treasury. These were of a considerable variety but fall into four main categories:

1. Entry of a falsified statement listing non-existent mercedes, which were then collected by the arrendador.
2. Continued non-payment of suppressed or modified mercedes either to the crown or to the merced holder.
3. Collusion between the collectors of "suppressed mercedes" and the tax-farmers.
4. The diversion to their owners of funds entrusted to crown officials for payment to the Treasury.

Evidence that tax-farmers continued their personal collection of mercedes scheduled to be paid from their account by submitting fraudulent

statements comes from an investigation concluded in 1501 on the situation in the merindad of Campos con Palencia. There, successive tax-farmers had pocketed a 38-480 maravedís merced supposedly owned by the Monasteries of Calabacanos and Matallana. All tax-farmers to the date of the investigation were included in the fraud:

Juan de Figueros	1481-1482 -	66,760 <u>maravedís</u>	
Luys de Alcala	1483-1487 -	166,900	"
Yuse Abenaex	1488-1490 -	100,140	"
Rabi Mayer	1491	33,480	"
Fernando de Graviel	1492-1494 -	100,140	"
Francisco Goncales	1495-1501 -	234,360	" 1

A similar fraud occurred in the merindad of Castro-Xerez where the local tax-farmers collected 50,000 per year on a false merced from 1483-1496 defrauding the Treasury out of some 420,000 maravedís.²

That the crown was neither able to give security to merced holders whose holdings had been reduced and then included in the "libro de las Declaratorias", nor collect the suppressed part of these mercedes for itself is shown by the situation in the merindad of Allende Ebro and the province of Guipuscoa. In this area, the indefatigable treasurer of Vizcaya, Juan de Porras, was ordered to collect amounts owed to both crown and merced holders from the cogedores and arrendadores of the district even if he had to auction their property.³ Porras, in a

1. A.G. Simancas, Escribania mayor de Cuentas, legajo 124.

2. Ibid.

3. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla, 5-84.

"memorial detailing his services to the crown in revealing frauds in the royal rents of his province, voiced the complaints of many approved merced holders to justify his activities:

Many are complaining that they have not enjoyed the privileges that were ordered to be left to them. 1

Collusion between collectors of suppressed mercedes and arrendadores made the task of actually collecting funds owed to the Royal Treasury a very difficult one. In one instance, one Bartalome de Caluaga had been left to collect certain sums owed to the crown from suppressed mercedes in the merindad of Allende Ebro. He collected a part of the amount left in his charge and also took 38,700 maravedís for himself, leaving 92,220 maravedís uncollected although they pertained to the account and had been cleared for collection by his immediate superiors the Contadores Mayores Fernand Peres Coronel and Herman Nunez, receiver of suppressed mercedes for 1480. The much larger sum, of course, remained in the hands of the arrendadores of the district.²

Dr. de Talavera, an important member of the Queen's council proved quite ready to bribe the tax-farmers of Salamanca to obtain their help in evading the loss of one million maravedís in fraudulently held mercedes. For helping him the tax-farmers demanded and received a heredamiento of 10,000 maravedís, 150 fanegas of bread and 350,000 maravedís in cash.³

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1. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla, 5-84:
"algunos se quejaron que no avian gozado de los prevyllejos que les mandamos dexar o de alguna parte dellos."
 2. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 1-227.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla, 5-104.

Collections of the suppressed mercedes account suffered not only from these collusions between arrendadores and merced holders but also by refusals to pay, suppressions due to lack of proper documentation and an enormous fraud perpetrated by high treasury officials connected with the account. The account of the "Receptores de los juros Quitados del ano de ochenta con los lugartenientes de Contadores Mayores Pasados" lists some 27,906,814 maravedís as the amount that could be collected in that year (the full 321,718,782) was probably not reached until the following year. Of this amount 4,727,644 was declared "uncertain" by the investigators and so could not be collected, 4,622,000 was left uncollected because of bankruptcies among the tax-farmers and 5,242,844 had to be subtracted for lack of proper documentation. In all some 14,920,368 maravedís could not be collected that year.¹

The remaining 14,920,368 maravedís and other mercedes not yet included in the account were left to the lugartenientes or assistants to the contadores mayores for collection:

and the lugartenientes of the contadores mayores gave letters to receive all the above to certain of their servants and to other persons acceptable to them, many of whom they say that they succored the said lugartenientes with what they received from the said letters ... and according to the books it appears that nothing of it has come to the service of their highness.

This fraud, together with the heavy discounts that had to be made from the account for other reasons, not only made it useless as a source of new revenue for the crown but transformed it into a liability. In order

1. A.G. Simancas, Diversos de Castilla, 5-104.

to cover payments already scheduled to be made from it the treasury had to provide some 12,975,405 maravedis from other sources.

A thorough investigation of mercedes was of great potential benefit to both the crown and the merced holding class. The monarchs, by recovering about one-third of grants made between 1464 and 1474 hoped to gain an important new source of revenue and at the same time, by ensuring the payment of the far larger part left in the hands of the nobility to re-establish their credit. Once this was accomplished they could once more make use of the highly important source of ready money represented by the sale of mercedes. The nobles, private individuals and institutions with the best and most valid claims on crown rents would see their investment protected at very little cost to themselves. In many cases they would be realizing something on certain of their holdings for the first time. Neither the crown nor the procuradores had ever intended that the merced holding class should lose heavily from the reform. On the contrary, its main investigatory and punitive efforts were clearly directed against tax-farmers. These were to be the real losers by the reform.

However, its results were to prove disappointing to both the crown and merced holders. Corrupt practices grown up during sixteen years of mismanagement could not be changed immediately. (Indeed in many sections of the treasury they were not to change at all.) Collusion between merced holders and tax-farmers and royal investigators and tax-farmers and among high crown officials served to reduce revenues from the suppressed mercedes account far below payments to be made from

it. And, for the merced holders who did come forward to declare their holdings the extent to which the crown could actually procure collection proved a great disappointment.

Despite these reservations the reform of 1480 cannot be accounted a failure. By the reform itself and by the later restoration of the auditing procedure used in the reign of Juan II confidence in royal credit was restored and mercedes could be once again sold at the normal prices. Altogether some 34,704,513 maravedís in juro de heredad was sold from 1480 to 1495 nearly equal to the amounts alienated under the "Prodigal" Henry IV,¹ with the consequent production of at least 347,045,130 maravedís for the expenses of the crown. Through these sales the nobles of course more than made up for their losses during the reform and held more of the royal patrimony on a firmer basis in 1495 than it had in 1475. Indeed by the 1500's a royal merced policy had become so generous that commissioners like Juan de Figuera were being sent out with blanket commissions to sell enormous quantities of mercedes frequently involving 500,000 maravedís or more.²

If the great reform of mercedes cannot now be considered an important element in the relations between crown and nobility after the war of succession what other elements of a policy can be found? In what ways did Ferdinand and Isabella try to control the formidable power of a class whose lands, armies and jurisdictions made them the single more important

1. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, legajo 40, "Sumario breve del cargoe data del reyno ano de 1496."

2. Archivo Historico Nacional, Section IX, Papales de Juros, legajo 320.

political and economic element in the state?

The answer to this very important question is a complex one and cannot, of course, be answered fully without a much more extensive exploration of private archives than has been yet attempted by anyone; however, the documents preserved in the archive of Simancas serve to give us a good indication of the general lines of royal policy as they developed from 1480-1492. Firstly, the crown sought to eliminate any possible foreign support that a general uprising by Castillian nobility could hope to secure or one party in a local dispute could summon. The defeat of Portugal and France and the alliance with Aragon eliminated three of the most important sources of outside aid and the war against Granada was to eliminate a fourth and Navarre a fifth. It will not be alleged here that the conquest of Granada was principally conceived of as a way of further weakening the political position of the Castillian nobility but its king Albuhan had played a not inconspicuous part in the recently concluded civil war - attacking Murcia while her main forces were employed in conquering the Marquisate of Villena¹ and making an alliance with the rebel count of Cabra in order to help him in Andalusia.² Full scale war, aimed at the final destruction of Al-Andalus would have the great virtue of occupying the most important military resources of the nobility for many years to come but also of incidentally destroying a possible haven and source of aid for any noble rebellion. Once Granada was conquered many of these same nobles would be induced by extensive

1. J. Torres Fontes, "La conquista", 147.

2. Palencia, op. cit., book IV, p.322.

mercedes on the well paid tenancies of important castles, to involve themselves to their cost, in a province with a restive population always prone to revolt and entirely unreliable in the support of its new masters.

Internally, the Crown strove to make itself the arbitrator of the potentially dangerous inter-noble disputes that had been so important during the civil war. By interposing its authority in the shape of Crown investigators and by using the Hermidad to enforce its judgements and orders, the Crown succeeded, for a time, in holding down the temperature and, when a serious crisis occurred, the Hermidad and troops under the command of Isabel's relations proved able to surmount it.

After its employment in the second war of the marquise the Hermidad was used not to attack important nobles directly but to establish and reinforce royal arbitration in their disputes. When the town and fortress of Hocantejo were taken from Ynigo Lopes de Mendoza by his brother Alonso Carillo, he appealed to the Crown. Seizing upon an excellent chance of showing its authority and power in inter-noble disputes, the Crown immediately ordered, (9 June 1480), Hermidad Captains Tello de Aguyar and Anton Luys Mudarra to intervene, capture the town and fortress and hold it until the Crown had reviewed the case and given its judgement. After Mudarra had taken it, it was awarded to Ynigo Lopes.¹ On 25 September 1482 the monarchs once again made skilful use of their position to intervene to protect the property of a defeated rebel, Juan Tellez Girón, Count of Urena, and so make him dependent on

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 9 June 1480, f.280.

their good will in the future. They assured him that:

We will not consent nor permit nor give occasion neither now nor at any other time that a lawsuit be brought against you by the Order of Calatrava nor any person in its name nor any demand placed on your town of Osuña that belonged to the said order. ¹

If the Order did decide to bring suit against Girón, the Crown promised to stir up the city of Cordoba to demand what right the Order had to possess Fuente Ovejuna "that the Lord King Don Henry had given to the said Order of Calatrava in exchange."²

So far, the Crown's efforts to make itself the supreme arbitrator of inter-noble and inter-familial disputes had met with considerable success. In no case did the parties affected defy the Crown's troops or dispute its decisions with armed force. But, by 1484, one of the gravest crises of the reign was provoked by just this policy of Crown intervention, and, in order to meet it, almost all available resources had to be mobilized.

Don Pedro Alvarez Osorio, Count of Lemos, had been one of the chief trouble-makers in Galicia during the war of succession. Using it to expand his own possessions, he and a number of other lords appropriated lands belonging to the Archbishop of Astorga, Garcia de Toledo. His share included Lovencan, Moral, Pardo de Ray and Val de Rey.³ He also

1. Archivo Historico Nacional, Registros Archivo de Osuña, legajo 13, Numero 44:

No consentiremos nin permitiremos nin daremos logar que agora nin en tiempo alguna por la dicha horden de Calatrava nin por personas alguna en su nombre vos sea movido pleyto nin puesta demanda sobre la vuestra villa de Osuña que fue de la dicha horden.

2. Ibid.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 30 November 1480, f.23.

took the important town of Curial from the order of Santiago and made every effort to include it in his own señorio. Then he proceeded to mistreat the townspeople and to turn to his own use the royal rents of the town and those pertaining to the Order. On a strenuous complaint by representatives of the town Fernando de Acuña governor of Galicia and Lopes de Castillo were sent to investigate.¹ His son continued the family depredations. On the death of Pedro a dispute over his will arose between his son, the new Count of Lemos, Rodrigo Enríquez Osorio and his wife and daughter. Ferdinand intervened, ordering that until the royal council decided the case all "the towns and fortresses and places that were in the hands of each side at the time were to remain in that state under royal security".² Rodrigo, wishing to anticipate the council's judgement, and fearful of the designs of the Count of Benavente, whose son Luis Pimental was married to Rodrigo's sister Juana, caused the castles of Peña Remyro and Peña Velloso to rise in his favour. The Crown, faced with a direct threat to its authority, ordered the governor of Galicia, Fernando de Acuña, to recapture the fortresses for the Countess Maria. This was done after numerous troops were called in, and the Crown, through its procurador fiscal, Pedro Dias de la Torre, sued Rodrigo to recover the entire cost of the siege, some 850,000 maravedís, for troops' salaries and 300,000 in other expenses.³ While the above case was heard in the council, Don Alonso Enríquez and the Marquis of

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1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 20 November 1480, f.152.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 2 February 1484.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 23 October 1486, f.93.

Astorga were appointed as arbitrators in the dispute between Rodrigo and his nearest relatives.¹ Their decision to award the fortress of Curollon in Bierzo to his sister Juana forced him into open rebellion:

and now relation is made to us that the Count Don Rodrigo Osorio left and absented himself from our court and has gone to the said land of Bierzo ... And it is said that he has gone with the intention of creating war and scandal in order to obstruct the execution of a sentence given by our orders by Don Alonso Enríques and the Marquis of Astorga as judges between the said Count and the Countess Juana. 2

Defying repeated orders to return under penalty of the loss of all his property and rents³ Rodrigo began organizing his forces in Galicia and Bierzo. In order to forestall his occupation of the castle of Castro del Rey now held for him by the governor of Galicia the Crown ordered the total sequestration of his property and lifted the homage that Diego Lopes de Haro had sworn to the count.⁴

Meanwhile the count, having raised troops from his lands, launched a further attack to recover his father's property from royal control. The most important piece of family property was the town of Ponferrada and its fortress, this having been placed in the hands of Jorje de Avendano who was to hold it until sentence had been handed down on its

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 23 October 1486, f.93.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 16 June 1484, f.121:
E. agora a nos es fecha relacion que el conde D. Rodrigo Osorio se partio e absento de nuestra corte e es ydo a la dicha tierra de Bierzo. E dis que es ydo con yntencion de poner escandalos e bellicos en ella a fyn de ynpedir la esecucion de una sentencia que por nuestro mandado dieron don Alonso Enriques e el marques de Astorga como Juezes que fueron entre el dicho conde e la condesa Dona Juana.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 16 June 1484, f.117.

4. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 10 May 1485, f.83.

ultimate disposition. Rodrigo laid siege to the fortress in March 1485 and by April 15 had expelled the loyal garrison.¹

This direct attack on a representative of Crown authority was the signal for a general mobilization against the count during which not only the forces of important nobles like the admiral and the Count of Benavente were used but also troops from the new elements whose loyalty and support were gradually being developed to counterbalance the nobles' military power - town militias and the Hermidadad. On 10 April 1485 the Count of Benavente had already been ordered to join the admiral with all his troops.² On 2 July 1485 the forces of Palencia were ordered to be mobilized³ and on 1st May 1486 Diego de Ulloa, Corregidor of the towns of Carrión and Sahagun, was ordered to mobilize all mounted and foot of the two cities for action against the count.⁴ In addition to those municipal levies paid by the crown, local nobles and capitanías of the Hermidadad raised a total of 600 lances and some 6,100 infantry to retake the fortress.⁵ After its capture, in order to make certain that it would never again become a bone of contention between Osorio and Benavente, the Crown purchased it from Juana on 5 April 1486.⁶

With the purchase of Ponferrada and the exile of Rodrigo Enríques Osorio one of the most serious internal rebellions of the post-war period

1. A.G. Simancas, Estado Castilla, 1-2, f.25.

2. A.G. Simancas, Estado Castilla, 1-2, f.26.

3. A.G. Simancas, Estado Castilla, 1-2, f.29.

4. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 1 May 1486, f.207.

5. A.G. Simancas, Guerra Antigua, 1-10.

6. A.G. Simancas, Libros de Copias de Documentos, ffs.154-181.

had come to a successful conclusion for the Crown. Despite its heavy cost, the Crown emerged with its prestige as an arbitration of inter-noble disputes unshaken and indeed enhanced. The successful mobilization of support from the towns and the Hermandad showed that the authority of the Crown with respect to these disputes was not to be flouted without risking the most serious consequences.

Now, Crown arbitration was being actively solicited in some important cases involving inheritance. Thus, when a dispute arose between the two sons of the deceased Duke of Alba, Garcia Alvarez de Toledo, over a clause in his will that awarded Salvatierra to the younger son, both he and his brother D. Padrique de Toledo decided that "in order to free us from litigation we put ourselves into the hands of the high and most powerful queen."¹

Continuing its active policy of intervention to protect the weaker party in a dispute between two noble families, the Crown, on 18 February 1486, ordered all royal officials of the kingdom of Galicia to come to the aid of Alvaro de Sotomayor in case of an attack on him by his father Pedro Alvarez de Sotomayor Count of Camina. Alvaro had seized two of his father's castles and feared an attempt at their recovery. In intervening to aid him the Crown sought to use him to counterbalance the influence of his father in the kingdom.²

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1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 1 April 1490, f.1:
por nos quitar de pleitos posimos e comprometimos amos a dos de
nuestra voluntad en manos a poder de la muy alta e muy poderosa
Reyna.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 16 November 1485:
In November 1485 Pedro Alvarez de Sotomayor seized the Archbishop
of Tuy, captured the town and forced the Archbishop to sign a
paper forgiving him and stating that he was owed 500 libras.

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Where the noble contestants had not yet come to blows the Crown was frequently able to prevent hostilities by quickly sending someone with authority to order the dispersal of opposing forces. Thus, when a boundary dispute broke out between the vassals of the Marquis of Astorga and the Count of Benavente Hernandad captain Miguel Dansa could be sent to investigate and order hostilities to cease. Francisco de Bobadilla, maestresala and corregidor of Cordoba was chosen as royal representative in the disagreement between the Count of Cabra and his neighbour Alfonso de Aguilar. He was given authority to order the dissolution of forces raised by the Count.¹ Proceeding in a slightly different way in another instance the Crown ordered the alcalde of Carmona, Alonso de Cespedes, to sequester the parcel of land that was giving rise to a serious boundary dispute between the Marquis of Cadiz on the one hand and the city of Seville on the other.²

Several other ingenious ways of controlling and weakening the nobility were devised during the years 1480-89. One of the most interesting of these was the payment of dowry or compensation by the Crown in most of the most important marriage contracts that were made. Just as in the marriage between Luyza Fajardo and Juan Chacon, the Crown hoped to direct and control important alliances with a view toward preventing too great a concentration of power in the hands of a few top families. Thus, one of the most important nobles in Andalusia, D. Luis de la Cerda, Duke of Medina Celi, was promised a particularly large

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 31 August 1488, f.116.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, March 1489.

compensation if he would consent to the marriage of his daughter Leonor to the Marquis of Cenete.¹

In the case of the powerful Estuñiga family the Crown acted to split up possessions among several members. In 1499, the final 5,000,000 maravedís of the 10,000,000 maravedís owed Juan de Estuñiga for the towns and fortresses of Curiel and Banares were paid. These places were to be given to his nephew Alonso de Estuñiga on his marriage.²

Another way in which Ferdinand and Isabella strove to reduce the power of the nobility was far more direct than guiding their marriage alliances. This second policy was aimed at reducing the number of strong points in their hands in two ways; by preventing the construction of new castles and by purchasing castles for the Crown.

Royal displeasure at the construction of new fortresses made itself felt quite early in the reign when the Corregidor of Asturias, Rodrigo de Torres, was ordered to see to the destruction of all those erected in the province for the past twelve years.³ One year earlier, on 4 September 1476, the monarchs moved to prevent the termination of a new fortress - called Roda - being built by Juan Pacheco Lord of Minaya.⁴

This policy of opposing castle building was continued throughout

1. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 51 C 5:

The agreement, which was signed on 1 October 1492 called for payment of 6,000,000 maravedís in a por vida merced. Due to Leonor's death in April 1498 this merced was partially revoked and he was left with only 250,000 maravedís.

2. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 57 E 13.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 6 July 1478, f.100.

4. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 4 September 1478, f.625.

the reign. On March 9, 1485 the Count of Nieva was prevented from ordering work to be continued on a "tower" that he was erecting on a place called Riotebya.¹ In another royal order, issued on 4 February 1487, officials of the town of Pedrosa were authorized to destroy a castle being erected in the vicinity by Suero de Solis.² And, on 5 July 1487 Diego Mudarra, now Corregidor of Ciudad Rodrigo, was given authority to pull down a fortress being erected by Juan Marrique, son of the Count of Casteneda.³

Fortresses and towns of strategic importance were also purchased by the Crown despite the expense this entailed. Not content with having neutralized the power of the Fajardo by the Chacon marriage, the Crown

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 9 March 1485, f.56.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 4 February 1487, f.38.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 6 July 1487, f.94:

Nos vos mandamos que fagades derribar la dicha casa e fortaleza por manera que se queda como antes estava e defende de nuestra parte el dicho D. Juan ny otra persona alguna no labre nyn hedifiquer la dicha casa syn nuestra licencia e mandado.

For further references to the destruction of castles by the Catholic Kings during the first part of their reign see the following references in the Registro General del Sello:

1. 2 June 1492, 285 order to cease castle-building in Viscaya.
2. () July 1492, 130 order to stop the construction of a castle being built near Madrid by Bernaldino Suarez de Mendoza on petition of the regidores of the city.
3. 21 September 1492, 273 commission given to Sanchez de Quesada to destroy a fortress being built near Jubera by Velasco de Quiniones.
4. () September 1492, 179 order to the corregidor of Ciudad Rodrigo to prevent the termination of a castle being built near Madrid by the Count of Coruna.
5. 14 May 1492, 257 order to prevent the construction of "El Risco" being built by Pedro de Avila Senor de Villafranca.
6. 3 July 1489, 216 order to investigate castle building by Pedro Alvarez Osorio, Marquis of Astorga.

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sought to reduce it by recovering the port of Cartagena. Possession of the town, with its fine harbour and strategically important location, would give its owner a commanding position in the province. It had been given to Pedro Fajardo because it could not be refused him after his services against the Marquis of Villena. No such obligation was felt toward his successor, Juan Chacon, who was made to return the city in exchange for a merced of 300,000 juro and the towns of Velez el Blanco, Velez el Rubio and Portillo.¹

In two other cases the Crown acted to reduce the holdings of important rebels against its authority. On 17 May 1492, Diego Lopez Pacheco surrendered the important town and castle of Riaza in return for a merced of 500,000 maravedís in juro and a cash payment of 1,000,000 maravedís.² In order further to reduce the power of the Count of Lemos, several of his most important possessions were purchased after he returned from exile. He received a total of 867,500 maravedís for the towns of Savia, Castillo del Rey, and Obrero del Rey.³ In 1500, the Acuña family, defenders of Burgos castle, lost the fortress of Cavilleja, purchased for 228,571 maravedís of juro from Lope de Acuña and his wife Maria de Contreras.⁴

One of the most important places recovered by the Crown was the

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1. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 58 F 3.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 71 L 9, 90 P 2.
The 1,000,000 maravedís paid to the Marquis on this occasion was the final payment on a total of 3,000,000 maravedís owed to him for the town.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 89 O 8.
 4. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 34 A 10.

great port city of Cadiz, long held by Rodrigo Ponce de Leon. This was accomplished by trading it for the Grenadine town of Caceres on 24 August 1491.¹ After Rodrigo's death the Crown intensified its efforts to reduce the family's holdings by limiting the duration of his merced of the quintas of Rota to only eight years.² His widow would then have to surrender collection of the tax to the Crown.

In exchanging the Grenadine city of Caceres for Cadiz Ferdinand and Isabella were simply continuing a policy that they had inaugurated with Rodrigo himself, by giving him his own conquest - Zahara - on 16 August 1484.³ This policy consisted of making extensive grants of land, rents and tenancies within the Kingdom of Granada sometimes in exchange for loans sometimes as a reward for military services rendered during the conflict. By 1493-94 most of the important noble families, and many lesser ones as well, were holders of well paid tenancies and remunerative lands in Granada. In 1493, Francisco de Bobadilla, Marquis of Moya, held the tenancy of Santa Fe for which he received 200,000 maravedís per year. The Count of Tendilla had the key fortresses of Alahambra and Benataubi for 565,000 maravedís, while Gonzalo de Cordoba was charged with Yllorca at 300,000 maravedís, and Hernando Enríquez received 150,000 for the tenancy of Malaga.⁴

1. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 11-61.

Rodrigo also paid some 10,000,000 maravedís cash.

2. Ibid.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 16 August 1484, f.2.

4. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, legajo 52 Antiguo, la dicha data de granada: tenencia de Granada ano de 1493.

Nobles actually holding land in the kingdom included Alonso de Aguilar who was given Almanan, Sierro and Lucar in 1492.¹ Other holders included the Duke of Cadiz with Serranya de Villa Luenga, and the Counts of Cabra, Cifuentes and Feria with lands in Malaga worth 120,000, 70,000, and 55,000 respectively. In the area of Granada itself the Count of Benavente and the two sons of the adelentado of Andalusia held some 102,000 maravedís in rent.

In Almeria and its district, Belfique and Feber were held by the Count of Urena and the Sierra de Filabres was shared by the Admiral D. Enrique Enríquez and the Marquis of Astorga. The Admiral also held several other places in the district, including Senes and Castro. Other property holders in the area were the Marquis of Astorga, the adelentado of Astorga and D. Pedro Puertocarrero.²

These grants were not exclusively meant as a reward for services. Territory in a recently conquered, half pacified province of the size and inaccessibility of Granada would by itself impose heavy responsibilities on the holder; when to this is added the anarchy that followed the close of the war the grants begin to look much less generous.³ In 1491, the

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 23 June 1492, f.8.

2. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, Ibid.

3. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, legajo 53 Antiguo, obispo de malaga relacion de cuenta ano de 1494.

The situation in Granada at the close of the war is well described in a letter circulated to the corregidores of Granada, Baza, Vera, Guadix, Loxa, Marbella, Velez-Malaga and Almeria. In this letter Isabella describes the disquieting situation in the kingdom:

A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 30 September 1492, f.80:

A nos es fecha relacion que algunas personas con mucha osadia non curando de las penas en tal caso establecidas, andan a rrobar por los camynos ansy en la tierra desta dicha cibdad (Granada) como en las otras partes desta comarca e que en el castigo de las delinquentes no se pone diligencia que deve.

first of the many general revolts, both large and small, that were to occur in the province, broke out. In a demand for compensation submitted some time after 1491 Israel "Ynterpete" tax-farmer of the district around Almeria requested 20,000 reales as compensation for his losses during a revolt by the towns lying along the Rio de Almeria.¹

Other disturbances followed, including one that claimed the life of Alfonso de Aguilar, one of Andalusia's most troublesome nobles. On 19 September 1501, his eldest son, Pedro Fernandez de Cordoba, was given 137,192 maravedís in juro and the tenancy of Intequera as compensation for the death of his father in the Sierra Bermeja and his own services in combating Guejar.²

Larger and more dangerous revolts were to come in the barely pacified kingdom, and the nobles who had so eagerly grasped at its lands and rents were to find themselves obliged to fight to maintain themselves in possession of them. The Crown was thus relieved of much of the responsibility and expense of holding the kingdom, while the resources of many members of the upper nobility were deeply engaged there.

Of course, severe outbreaks of private wars and other disputes among nobles were continuous throughout the first part of the reign³ and increased dangerously during 1490-92, but with the successful

1. A.G. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 2-282.

2. A.G. Simancas, Mercedes y Privilegios, 58 F 13:

En atencion a que su padre Alonso Fernandez de Cordoba cuyo era la casa de aguylar fue muerto en Sierra Bermeja por los moros, e que el salio herido en la cara.

3. See A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello for examples.

development of the Hermandad to counterbalance their military power, and the growing alliance with the towns serving as a counterweight to their political ambitions, these outbursts never became part of any overall plan by one group of nobles to control the monarchy in order to use it against another group. With their freedom of action thus reduced and the decline in the importance of their military forces that was already evident during the war, as well as the vast opportunities for the purchase and collection of mercedes that were being thrown open to them by the Crown the Castilian nobility slowly declined from being sole arbitrators of Castilian politics to being a class of enormously wealthy landed proprietors - the latifundistas of the next century. So far had their political role declined that during the revolt of the comuneros they had to be content with being mere spectators until almost the end of the conflict. Their place as contestants for political power was taken over by the instigators of that revolt: the urban patriciate.

CHAPTER IV

CROWN FINANCES

Another factor that dramatically increased the relative power and independence of the Crown vis-a-vis the upper nobility was the extensive development of royal revenues. This arose firstly from increased exploitation of "ordinary rents". These traditional revenue sources can be divided into several categories. Foremost in importance were taxes on the sale or transit of goods - these included the alcavalas or sales tax - the almojarifadgo or customs duty paid when goods entered a town or port in Andalusia and the "diezmos de la mar", the customs duty that applied whenever there was no almojarifadgo. The growing sheep raising industry was taxed by use of the servicio y montadgo or sheep tolls collected at special customs stations. Acquisition of the great military orders vastly increased the Crown's share of this tax.¹ Another important source of revenue that fell indirectly on merchandise was the tercia or the two-ninths of all clerical dues that had to be paid to the Crown.² Net income from the ordinary accounts rose from 27,415,626 maravedís in 1477 to 125,258,888 maravedís in 1488.³

These "ordinary" income accounts were used to pay most of the "ordinary" expenditure of running the court and government. The debit side of the account thus includes items like the upkeep of the palaces,

1. Miguel Angel Ladero Quesada, La hacienda real Castellana entre 1480 y 1492, (Valladolid, 1967), p.18.

2. Ibid., p.19.

3. Ibid., p.27.

the expense of maintaining the courts of Ferdinand, Isabel and the Princes, purchases, salaries and defence. From 1482 to 1488 these expenditures rose from 80,226,000 to 112, 758,537 but never faster than receipts, so that the account showed a constantly favourable balance throughout the period.¹

At the same time, a number of extraordinary income accounts were developed which proved invaluable in financing both the war and other state expenditure. Probably the most important of these was the preaching of the Crusade. First permitted by a Bull of Sixtus IV in 1482 and then renewed in 1485, 1487, 1489 and 1491² it yielded the Crown some 361,199,722,950 maravedís from Castile alone, and 26,020,874 maravedís from Aragon, 37,855,544 from Valencia, 2,761,421 from Mallorca and some 32,508 and 658,946 pounds from the principality of Barcelona and the Kingdom of Navarre respectively, during the war years. The prior of Prado, Fernando de Talavera, who was named chief commissioner, and his receiver, Francisco Gonzalez de Sevilla, in his name received and paid some 505,805,871 maravedís out of Crusade funds from 1485-1492 - the years in which the greatest collections were obtained.³

Another source of extraordinary income of clerical origin was the special subsidy first voted on the 2 October 1482 at an assembly of Castilian Clergy in Cordoba. This subsidy amounted to 100,000 florins

1. Miguel Angel Ladero Quesada, La hacienda real Castellana entre 1480 y 1492, (Valladolid, 1967), p.35.

2. Azcona, op. cit., p.533.

3. Ibid., p.534.

or 24,000,000 maravedís (at 240 maravedís per florin). When the subsidy was again demanded in 1485, 1489 and 1491, it was imposed not by vote of the bishops themselves but by the prelates resident at court with the co-operation of Cardinal Mendoza. These men demanded the slightly higher figure of 115,000 florins from the clergy for the year 1485¹ and although there are no exact figures for the subsidies of 1489 or 1491 the higher sum probably prevailed. Thus, in four subsidies, the Castilian church gave more than 96,000,000 maravedís to the treasury.²

In the Kingdom of Aragon, where a tenth (diesmo) of the absolute value of each benefice was paid, the results were as follows: for 1491 the bishoprics of Barcelona, Gerona, Vich, Urgel and Lerida contributed 6,350 pounds, 7 sueldos and 3 dineros and in 1492 the same places, excluding Tarragona, contributed 6,521 pounds (libras), 5 sueldos and 11 dineros.³

Several other extraordinary accounts should be included in this summary. Special taxes were placed on the Jews during the war years. Called the castellanos del oro, they varied between 18,000 and 10,000 castellanos during the war years. As each castellano was worth 485 maravedís their total contribution to the war effort was nearly 50,000,000 maravedís.⁴ Another extraordinary account was the Inquisition. The royal pagador Francisco Gonzales de Sevilla received some 25,000,000

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.529.

2. Ibid., p.530.

3. Ibid., p.532.

4. Ibid., p.631.

from this source between 1485 and 1488.¹

Two other revenue sources were derived mainly from the towns. These were forced loans and the Hermanidad contributions, both ordinary and extraordinary. The first major series of forced loans began in 1485, and between 1485 and 1488 Talavera's pagador, Francisco Gonzalez de Sevilla, received some 115,906,441 maravedís from this source. A second wave of forced loans came during preparations for the siege of Baza in February 1498. Royal officials were named in each town to receive the loans which were to fall on those with property valued at over 50,000 maravedís. The loans, scheduled to be repaid within one year, totalled 145,809,985 maravedís.²

Another extraordinary income account that depended on the towns - this time for voting and collection as well as the funds themselves - were Hermanidad contributions. These were of two kinds: the ordinary contribution used to defray the cost of apprehending criminals, and the extraordinary, which was a subsidy equivalent to the service of 10,000 foot for eighty days. These subsidies were voted at the yearly Hermanidad juntas.

During the fifth prorogation of the Hermanidad (1490-93) the extraordinary contribution amounted to 24,132,381 maravedís per year, for a total of 48,264,762. The ordinary contribution during the same period was fixed at 33,500,000 per year.

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1. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Cuentas, legajo 89.
 2. Miguel Angel Ladero Quesada, Milicia y economia en la guerra de Granada, (Valladolid, 1964), p.80.

The uses to which the funds obtained through this account were put perfectly illustrate the freedom with which the monarchs diverted funds that were ostensibly destined for war expenses to increase the flexibility and power of the treasury. The account of Hermanidad treasurers Luis de Santangal and Francisco Pinelo for 1490-92 reveals the following payments made from the extraordinary account:¹

1. maintenance of frontier fortresses	20,000,000 mrs.
2. repayment of Cardinal Mendoza for several previous loans	6,000,000
3. repayment of D. Enrique Enríquez	5,000,000
4. Juan Alvarez de Toledo for maintenance of fortresses	3,000,000
5. Gavriel Sanches, repayment of loan	4,155,216
6. Juan de la Torre, repayment	1,250,000
7. dowry of Fernand Alvares de Toledo's daughter	3,000,000
8. salary for members of royal council	270,000
9. to be distributed to the town representatives at the <u>Hermanidad junta</u> of Ademuz	200,000
10. <u>merced</u> of <u>juro</u> to the Marquis of Villena	295,486
11. <u>merced</u> to Pedro de Luna	15,000
12. paid to Talavera	912,075
13. payment to treasurers of the account as salary	524,030

Another vital source of support for the war effort was the

1. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Cuentas, legajo 134.

contribution, in men, money and supplies, that was made by the towns directly. After 1484, when 350 horse and 1,000 foot were demanded, Jerez's contribution varied between 200 horse and 800 foot (in 1485) to 200 horse and 1,000 foot in 1489, 1490 and 1491.¹

At the same time, heavy contributions of foodstuffs and other supplies were demanded, along with the provision of pack animals. At the start of the first campaign, 15 May 1482, Herez was ordered to make a general levy on its citizens in order to produce some 3,000 fanegas of flour, 5,000 arrobas of wine, 100 cows and 500 sheep.² Exemption from the alcavala was offered to those who brought these supplies to the camp. Similar amounts were required for 1484 and 1485,³ but by 1489, with the intensification of the war, and the ever larger number of troops that were required, demands for provisions also rose dramatically. The campaign of 1489 saw Jerez called upon to contribute a total of 12,000 fanegas of grain and 12,000 of barley, in addition to other supplies.⁴

The case of Burgos, while less well documented due to the paucity of relevant documents, also shows heavy war contributions. In just one year (1483), the city was called upon to contribute a total of 200 foot at a cost of 500,000 maravedís, a special subsidy of 800,000 maravedís,

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares 8 March 1484, 13 May 1485, 5 March 1491.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares 15 May 1485, f.86.

3. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas, 22 April 1489, f.20.

4. Serrano, op. cit., p.218.

and a forced loan of 1,600,000 maravedís.¹ In order to meet the increasing demands made upon it during 1489-91 the city was authorized to impose a tax on foodstuffs to the amount of 1,500,000 maravedís.²

According to Pulgar, whose figures are borne out by studies of documents preserved in local archives, most of the major towns made heavy contributions to the campaign of 1489. In all, some 2,270 horse and 19,700 foot were collected from the towns for the Baza campaign.³

Vastly increased exploitation of the ordinary income accounts and the addition of lucrative extraordinary revenue sources had all served to make the Crown largely independent of the upper nobility during 1480-1489. Funds coming from these accounts could be used to raise troops, and pay for artillery, supplies and munitions. While the collaboration of forces sent by the upper stratum of Castilian nobility was an important element in the eventual victory they were not as essential as the total contribution in men, money foodstuffs and equipment made by the towns. Furthermore, aside from the Crusade, all of the new extraordinary income accounts depended for voting and collection on the towns and their city councils. Even in the ordinary accounts the story of dependence on the towns is repeated, since most of the rise in net revenues during 1480-89 came from increased collection of the alcavala and other duties paid by merchants.

Thus Crown finances during the war years accurately reflect the

1. Serrano, op. cit., p.250.

2. Ladero, "Milicia y economia", p.107.

3. Ibid., p.41.

vast political change that had taken place whereby a monarchy that had been wholly dependent on the support and good-will of the upper nobility in 1475 could, by 1489, afford to dispense with them in favour of an alliance with the urban patriciate. Within a very short time this change was to have the most profound effect on some of the Spanish Crown's traditional policies and on the future of Spain and the West.

CHAPTER VTHE CROWN AND THE URBAN PATRICIATE
PART I: INTERDEPENDENCE

Precisely because of the dramatic changes that had taken place in financial policy and in the Crown's relationship with the upper nobility it now becomes necessary to describe the pattern of interaction between the Crown and the urban governing class as it developed during the war years. In order to approach this question properly, the distribution of political and administrative power within the Castilian city must first be understood.

Municipal government in the last decades of the fifteenth century was composed generally of two important elements: the cabildo or Ayuntamiento (town council), and the corregidor, a royal official who presided over its meetings and represented the authority of the Crown within the municipality. Co-operation between both these powers was not only necessary to the stability of the city but also to the successful completion of royal orders, and to the provision of war servicios.¹

City councils were of varying composition, sometimes being composed of sixteen regidores and four or five alcaldes² and sometimes of twenty four regidores (called veintiquatros). These regidores usually had a group of jurados associated with them plus alcaldes and other officials.³

1. See the mobilization order of 15 May 1482 on the necessity of partnership between cabildo and corregidor in the making up of war repartimientos.

2. Serrano, op. cit., p.12.

3. This was the situation in Jerez and Murcia.

While the alcaldes normally functioned as judicial officers intervening in civil and criminal cases and seeing that sentences were brought before the merino mayor and his assistants the members of the cabildo (regidores and jurados) acted in the daily administration of the city. They had complete control over the election of procuradores to the Cortes, judicial officers of the Hernandad, mayordomos, guards and overseers and supervised the functions of all these officials. In addition, the cabildo set tax-rates, let municipal contracts and raised troops for both national and local defence.¹

As a consequence of its position in local administration the cabildo possessed the power to carry out speedily or seriously obstruct royal orders. When a royal cedula was delivered to the cabildo at one of its sessions a debate usually ensued, which could end in one of two ways: either the council approved the order and agreed to carry it into effect, or it would approve the order but refuse to complete it. If the council did not want to carry an order into effect it would indulge in a series of manoeuvres designed to waste time and create such confusion that the Crown was frequently forced to modify its demands.

The case of Juan de Sepulveda, alferez (the officer who carried the banner of the town militia) of Jerez de la Frontera, clearly illustrates the practices of the cabildo when it did not want to carry

1. Jeronimo Castillo de Bobadilla, *Politica para corregidores y senores de vassallos en tiempo de paz y de guerra etc.*
In: R.S. Chamberlain, *The Corregidor in Castile in the Sixteenth Century and the Residencia as applied to the Corregidor*, Hispanic American Historical Review, vol. 23 (May 1943), pp.236.

out a royal order. Sepulveda had previously obtained and presented an order directing the cabildo to increase his salary. He also claimed that the members of the cabildo then in attendance had approved the order and ordered that it be completed, and, on the strength of this, demanded his salary. However, a meeting of the full cabildo on 11 August 1483 refused to confirm execution of the order until representations had been made at court:

The said letter of the Queen should only be obeyed as a letter of her Highness our lady; and, as to its completion, I say that we must desist until her Highness is informed my many and clear reasons. 1

Since the regidores and jurados feared that their own salaries would be cut in order to pay for Sepulveda's increase they decided to postpone payment until a relacion could be sent to court. The pages in the book of Actas Capitulares for 1483 do not contain any further reference to the salary rise.

Obviously, to counterbalance a powerful and well entrenched body like the cabildo the Crown required a representative of considerable power and local authority. This was the need for which the office of the corregidor was developed. These officials, who may have been the direct descendants of the so-called alcaldes veedores, were originally (during the reign of Alfonso XI) judges of commission appointed for

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 11 August 1483, f.208.

La dicha carta de la dicha Reyna deve ser obedecyda solamente asy como carta de nuestra reyna e senorita e quanto al complymento della digo senores que deveades sobre seer fasta que a su alteza sea notificado por muchas e manyfestas rasones.

specific cases.¹ The office spread gradually until it was greatly extended during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella. By 15 March 1494 almost all the major cities and regions had their separate corregidor.²

His powers within the town and its district were very great. In civil cases he could hand down decisions on cases of 1,000 maravedís or less; while in criminal ones he had full jurisdiction even though appeal was allowed to the proper audiencia.³ Politically, he was charged with seeing to it that royal orders were obeyed and that royal authority was maintained not only in the town but in its district as well. He also was charged with enforcing the observance of city ordinances. In order to carry out his duties he could elect his own alcaldes and lugartenientes. In addition, he had control of the municipal fortifications in many towns and would appoint one of his alcaldes to take charge of them.⁴

The corregidor also had very important responsibilities in financial matters. He assumed general responsibility for the collection of royal subsidies voted in the Cortes and supervised the account of the propios (income derived by the town from its own taxes or property).⁵ This latter charge was one of considerable importance as the funds involved

1. Chamberlain, op. cit., p.224.

2. Azcona, op. cit., p.343.

3. Chamberlain, op. cit., p.233.

4. Ibid., p.234.

5. Ibid., p.227.

were apt to be considerable.¹

Although the corregidor had great powers within the city and its district, and even presided over cabildo meetings he was still weaker than the cabildo in a number of crucial ways. He did not vote at their meetings and in some cases could not even express his opinion. Furthermore, he was obliged to carry out the majority decision even if he did not agree with it. The cabildo could also meet in his absence in order to draw up complaints against him.²

Perhaps the greatest weakness of the corregidorial system came from the yearly investigation into his conduct while in office. This investigation was called the residencia and during it both he and his officials were suspended from their offices for 30 days and replaced by a specially appointed juez de residencia who was empowered to consider any charges brought against them by the city. These investigations often served as a vehicle for the corregidor's enemies to strike back at him for any measures he might have taken while in power and frequently inhibited a corregidor from taking strong actions for fear of later punishment.³ Although the corregidor was allowed to prepare a list of

1. Chamberlain, op.cit., p.238. In Jerez the total rent returns of city property plus the novena del vino, a tax normally considered as part of the propios was some 200,000 maravedís in 1482. In Burgos a document entitled "Los propios de la ciudad de Burgos" lists a whole series of municipal propios including a tax called the "rents de la barra" which brought in 348,000 maravedís per year. See Actas Capitulares of Jerez de la Frontera for estimate of total propios made on 3 January 1483. For Burgos see Actas Capitulares of 1503.

2. Ibid., p.241.

3. See the complaints made about Diego de Carvajal corregidor of Murcia in Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares 28 February 1483.

his enemies in order to eliminate prejudice from the proceedings, investigators often preferred using their testimony because: "it was easier to come by the truth through interviewing his enemies rather than his friends".¹ Once a corregidor's reputation was damaged during one of these investigations it was difficult for the Crown to continue him in office beyond the normal one- or two-year term even if it so desired.²

Another major weakness of the corregidor as opposed to the cabildo was the brevity of his term of office. Most corregidores held office from one to two years. Although in some cases this could be extended almost indefinitely through successive re-appointments (e.g., Juan de Robles in Jerez), the Crown was normally reluctant to do this because the regidores would simply refuse to co-operate with an unpopular corregidor. These short terms of office are in sharp contrast to the relative permanence of cabildo offices. Not only were the same persons present year after year but normally they were allowed to pass their offices on to their sons or relations.³

Against such an entrenched and powerful urban patriciate the

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1. Chamberlain, op. cit., p.255.
 2. See documents on the replacement of corregidor Diego de Carvajal by Rodrigo de Mercado in Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 12 June 1484.
 3. See A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 9 October 1476, f.185, 29 October 1476, f.641, 3 November 1476, f.695, 5 December 1476, f.696, 18 February 1477, f.91, 21 February 1477, f.93, for just a few of the many examples of the inheritance of municipal posts. There is no doubt that positions on the cabildo were confined to a small group of families from at least the beginning of the fifteenth century.

corregidor could do little. He could and did ignore them occasionally or force them to do his bidding against their will, but even a tough and sagacious man like Juan de Robles who had complete backing from the Crown and an extraordinarily long term of office, could do little to change their practices. Most other corregidores did not enjoy this long term support and lived in fear of an investigation; for them co-operation with the cabildo was the safest course.

Ultimately, despite its expressed desire to reform municipal government and increase its power in the towns, the Crown preferred to associate itself with the urban patriciate, and protect it from its enemies in the town in return for its acquiescence in forced loans, and the efficient collection of troops, supplies and subsidies. Of course, all those who were not connected with the small upper stratum lost through this arrangement. These people suffered throughout the war from the corruption and favouritism of the cabildo without being able to hope for redress from the Crown.

The complaints of abuses by regidores and jurados that came flooding into court or were voiced at cabildo meetings by disgruntled citizens reveal the ways in which the urban patriciate used its key position on the cabildo to escape from war taxation and profit from the war itself. One of the most frequently heard complaints was that tax rolls were being made up unfairly either to the detriment of the poor or to exempt cabildo members, their families and allies.

Complaints from the poor began quite early in the war as petitions were presented in Jerez as early as February 1483 calling for a change in

the present system so that "cada uno peche por lo que tiene" instead of each citizen paying the same amount regardless of wealth.¹ The cabildo's reaction to these demands was swift and effective. It ordered the apprehension and punishment of those who had instigated the petition.²

A far more common complaint was that the regidores were deliberately excluding certain favoured persons from the tax roll. On 3 August 1488 Sancho de Corita and Bartolome de Villa Vicencia presented a petition to Juan de Robles which complained that the citizens of the collacion of San Marcos:

are aggrieved because the licenciado Diego Manuel de Huete, Pedro Nuñez son-in-law of the veinticuatro Juan de Herrera, and Francisco de Medina, citizens of the said collacion of Saint Mark were left out of the servicio and repartimiento. And all these are wealthy hidalgos who ought to be included in the tax roll and serve according to their property. 3

A similar complaint reached the royal council from Ciudad Real in 1490. In this petition the pecheros (tax-paying class) complained that the regidores exceeded their authority by intervening in the making up of the tax roll for that year. They intervened in order to "relieve those they

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 10 February 1483, f.46.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 19 February 1483, f.48.

3. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 3 August 1488, f.3:

Son agravyados a cabsa de dexar a servyr en al dicho servycio e repartimiento el licenciado Diego Manuel de Huete e Pedro Nuñez yerno de Juan de Herrera, veinticuatro, e Fernando de Medina vecinos e moradores en la dicha collacion de San Marcos; e todos estos son fidalgos e buenos e ricos e de grand caubdal e fasyendas a las quales devyan entrar en este repartimiento e servyr por los bienes que cada uno dellos tienen.

wanted to".¹

When, as so frequently happened, the corregidor himself was prepared to wink at the activities of the cabildo the complaints of those without special connections were utterly useless. Rodrigo de Mercado, corregidor of Murcia from 1485 to 1487, testified that during his term of office:

Some persons had come to him to complain saying that the jurados did not make the register of tax-payers properly and left many persons out. 2

Mercado continued by saying that he personally went through each parish, tax-roll in hand, visiting each house in order to see if the occupants had been included. After this survey he concluded that: "there were many persons not included in the tax-roll". However, despite this information, he returned to the cabildo and agreed with its claim that only the poorest had been excluded from the roll. It is hardly necessary to point out that the regidores' normal practice was quite the opposite; exemptions for the rich and heavier taxes for the pecheros. Mercado, since he had made his own investigation of the missing vecinos, could have then proceeded to assess their wealth himself. Instead, the matter was allowed to drop, and the cabildo's estimates were accepted without further comment.

Exemption of friends and relatives from the rigours of wartime

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1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 22 December 1491, f.220.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Caja 11, Numero 26. From testimony given by former corregidor Rodrigo de Mercado to Dr. Rodrigo Diaz during the monarchs' visit to the city on 13 July 1488:

E dixo que quando era corregidor en este cibdad algunas personas se venia a quejar a el diziendo que los jurados non enpadronava sus parroquias como devyan e que dexavan muchos fuera de los padrones.

taxation was the defensive aspect of the economic activity of the urban patriciate during the war. There was a more aggressive side which consisted of two things: directly profiting from the servicios that each town was called upon to provide and the assumption of profitable commercial privileges, common land, and salt-making facilities through grants made by the Crown or the cabildo itself, or through purchase.

The assumption of salt-making facilities that began early in the war in Jerez de la Frontera is typical of this latter process. These assumptions commenced at the cabildo meeting of 7 July 1483 when, in the enforced absence of Juan de Robles, his alcalde mayor Juan de Pas presided over it. At this meeting, the entire cabildo demanded and received grants of salt-making facilities from Pas who had the approval of the Crown to grant them despite the fact that salt making had long been a Crown monopoly. Despite various royal orders forbidding any further grants of this type the cabildo went on granting salt-making facilities to its members throughout the war.¹

Another major target of the urban patriciate during this period was common land either of their own city or of surrounding towns within its jurisdiction. These assumptions of common land were especially marked between 1487 and 1492. In 1487 Juan de la Hoz, regidor of Segovia, took the residence of Murcia's corregidor Juan de Mercado. In

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 7 July 1483, f.162. For the continued granting of salt-making facilities and other rights to members of the cabildo see: Actas, 19 August 1483, f.196, 7 August 1483, f.205v, 1 August 1483, f.226, 28 January 1490, f.38, 22 January 1490, f.67v.

his report to the Crown, a copy of which was issued to the city on 4 April of that year, he found that:

the regidores and officials of the said city have divided the boundaries and lands of the Campo de Cartagena between them and among other important men of the city to the great hurt of its people. 1

The regidores and their associates had also been active in other parts of the district with the result that:

Much of the land surrounding the city is taken and occupied and they do not let the townspeople enjoy the use of it. 2

In Cordoba, the regidores were also engaged in taking over common lands. A royal cedula of 5 May 1491 records that:

in the city of Cordoba and her district the use of the commons has been taken over by the regidores of the city as well as by the neighbouring nobility. 3

1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Cartas Reales, 1478-88, ff.210-211v:
Los regidores e oficiales de la dicha cibdad an repartido entre sy e entre los otros ombres principales de la dicha cibdad los terminos e heredimientos del campo de Cartagena en grand agravyo del comun de la dicha cibdad.

2. Ibid:

Otroay paresce que muchos de los terminos de la dicha cibdad estan tomados e ocupados e que no les dexan a los vecinos de la dicha gozar de los terminos.

Also see Actas Capitulares of Murcia for granting of common land to members of the cabildo. See: 17 June 1488, 19 February 1491, 17 June 1488, 3 December 1491.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 5 May 1491, f.117:

A nos es fecha relacion que en la cibdad de cordoba e su tierra al uso e comun de los vecinos della estan entrados e tomados asy por los regidores de la dicha cibdad como por los cavalleros comarcanos.

This document raises the tantalizing question of collusion between town officials and surrounding nobility in the seizure of common land. However the present state of research on the fifteenth century nobility does not allow us to make any general statements on this problem. Our difficulties are further compounded by the confusion of the use of the word caballero which could stand for a great noble like the Marquis of Cadiz as well as smaller landed proprietors or the members of the urban aristocracy themselves.

Two years earlier the Crown had specifically forbidden this after a complaint by the town of Hornachuelos, but, as we have seen, royal orders had little or no effect on the regidores.¹

The same story of aggressive takeovers of common lands was repeated in Salamanca. In March 1492, the regidores passed ordinances that enabled them to acquire houses and property on the outskirts of the city and deny its citizens the use of the land.² Similar complaints about discriminatory ordinances were received from Agreda on 14 August 1492 and Miranda del Ebro on 6 August of that year.³

As the power responsible for organizing the collection of funds destined for war subsidies, payment of local militia serving at the front, Hermanidad taxes and war supplies the cabildo was in a perfect position to derive profit from them. In Madrid the regidores diverted to their own use funds that had been collected to meet the Hermanidad payment:

relation has been made to us by the pecheros of this city that a special tax has been paid by them to pay for the Hermanidad, and that if anything is left after the payment the regidores of the city take it for themselves. 4

Another favourite tactic of the regidores and jurados was to

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 2 May 1489, f.181.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 13 March 1492, f.145.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 14 August 1492, f.75, 6 August 1492, f.134.

4. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello,

Por parte de los ombres buenos pecheros desta dicha cibdad nos fue fecha relacion que para pagar la hermandad tenyan echada entre ellos sysa e que antes de agora sy alguna cosa sobrava despues de pagar la dicha hermandad dyes que la tomavan e se aprovechavan dello los regidores desta dicha cibdad.

deliberately order a tax collection well in excess of the amount owed. This occurred in Torquemada where a total of 207,573 maravedís was collected from all sources in order to meet the special and regular Hernandad contributions. These did not amount to more than 80,000 in any one year.¹ The corregidor, although ostensibly supposed to take the accounts of the propios and repartimientos was normally ignored by the cabildo. A cedula of 29 October 1492 complained that in Murcia: "the regidores spend money from the propios without the knowledge of the corregidor".²

Despite the constant complaints about regidorial corruption, seizure of common lands and favouritism in the making up of tax rolls the Crown followed a policy of co-operation with the regidores provided that war servicios were collected quickly and efficiently. Of course, this policy of co-operation was not advertised. Royal orders fulminating against the corrupt practices of regidores were constantly being issued but the corruption went on and, when efforts to alter the local power structure were made from within, the urban patriciate could always count on the crown to aid it in its struggle against disaffected elements.

The Crown's favourable attitude toward the urban patriciate was clearly shown, when, in 1488, Gomes Patino and Gonzalo Pagan, two well-off but poorly connected citizens of Murcia, stirred up its citizens against the way in which tax-rolls were being made up. They opened

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1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 31 August 1491, f.223.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 30 October 1492, f.45. See similar situation in Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1485, ffs. 180v-181.

their campaign by organizing petitions to be sent to court in which were registered complaints about the tax-rolls and other things and demands for the election of a representative of the commons (procurador comun). This official would be empowered to intervene in order to insure that taxes were assessed fairly, and could receive petitions from the citizens concerning them. The petitioners also hoped that he would be allowed to vote in the cabildo itself.

Obviously, this direct threat to the position of the cabildo would evoke a strong response and by the meeting of 12 August 1488 some of the petition's signers were coming forward to plead ignorance of its contents:

John de Calavera said that he signed the said petition because Gonzalo Pagan told him that it was for the merced only. He begged for their pardon because if he had not been deceived he would not have signed the said petition. 1

The cabildo then proceeded against Pagan himself. When, on 17 October 1488 he came to complain that water from a pond was flooding a part of his land, the hostility of the cabildo suggested a deliberate attempt to harm him:

The members ordered that notwithstanding the abovesaid that what was ordered be continued and that the water continue to flow. 2

Three days later, when Pagan returned to complain about the continued

1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 12 August 1488: Juan de Calavera dixo que el firmo en la dicha peticion por que Goncalo Pagan le dixo que solamente hera para lo del merced e non para otras cosas. E que les pedia por merced que le perdonasen por que sy el no fuese enganado no firmava la dicha peticion.
2. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 17 October 1488: Los dichos senores, non embargante todo lo suso dicho mandaron que todavia se faga lo mandado y que todavia vaya el agua.

flooding the cabildo ordered his removal from the land.¹

However, it was too late to prevent a thorough airing of local complaints about corruption in the tax-rolls. In their petition they complained that:

The community is fatigued because of the frauds made by the jurados every time they come to collect the rents and repartimientos because when they make up the tax-rolls they leave out their friends, relatives and servants letting what they should pay fall to the lot of other citizens. 2

The main reason for the above was the lack of an elected community representative on the cabildo. The Crown was forced to agree to the election of a procurador comun but it refused to accede to the demand that he be allowed a vote on the cabildo. In fact he was not even allowed to express his opinion or present petitions from the other citizens. The Crown's concession in allowing the election of a procurador was nullified by his almost complete lack of power.³

After the death of the first elected procurador comun Pagan succeeded in obtaining royal permission for the election of another. On 10 November 1489, shortly after the election, certain persons

1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 20 October 1488.
2. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 15 December 1488, f.16:
El dicho comun es fatygado a cabsa de las fraudes e colusyones que en las rentas e repartymientos que en la dicha cibdad se fassen, cada e quando son menester por los jurados de la dicha cibdad, diz que ellos tienen muchos parientes e criados e otras personas a los quales diz que al tiempo del hazer de las dichas derramas e repartymientos diz que les salva cargando lo que ellos avyan de pagar sobre los otros vecinos de la dicha cibdad lo qual es todo a cabsa de non aver procurador puesto por parte de la dicha comunydad que esta a los dichos repartymientos e derramas.
3. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 15 December 1488, f.16.

presented a petition to the cabildo demanding an end to discrimination in the making up of tax-rolls for the new war servicio.¹

Now ensued the first major conflict between the Crown's representative - the corregidor - and the procurador comun. The all-important war servicio could not be collected by the jurados because of the agitation stirred up by the procurador. The corregidor took immediate action and offered to accompany the jurados on their rounds and arrest all those refusing to pay.² By 20 January 1490 the corregidor was ready to move against the procurador comun directly so as to avoid any further disturbances. He stripped him of the right to receive petitions from the citizens or respond to them under pain of a 50,000 maravedí fine. If they had complaints he should tell them that:

He was not the judge of these things and that they should go to the corregidor or the cabildo, because from the contrary follows disservice to their highnesses and scandal in this city. ³

The Crown's strong desire to maintain a close relationship with the

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1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 10 November 1489.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 17 November 1489. The protest against the way in which tax-rolls were being made up soon turned into a general complaint against the regidores themselves:
Las dichas maravedis no los podemos cobrar por la grand rebellion que tiene a causa de los escandalos que en ello Juan de escontel procurador del comun ynboquando a muchos vecinos e fasiendo ligas e juntamientos e monypodios, poniendo reprochas en las derramas e repartimientos, que se fassen para servicio de sus altezas disiendo mal de los regidores e jurados.
 3. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 20 January 1490:
El no es juez de aquello, que vaya al corregidor o al concejo e que aquellos le conpliran de justicia por quanto de lo contrario se sygue deservicio a sus altezas e escandalo en este cibdad.

urban patriciate made itself manifest in a number of other instances during the course of the war. Several attempts by the pechero class to overthrow the regidores are recorded. In both cases, that of Toro in 1485 and Sepulveda in 1492, the Crown ordered no action to be taken against the regidores because this would be in "disservice" of the Crown.¹

In another action, somewhat similar to the one in Murcia, the Crown moved to restrict the powers of the newly elected procurador comun of Caceres. The regidores had sent a petition to court demanding that limits be set to his right to intervene in making up the tax-rolls. The Crown's response was to order that "the person thus named should not have the right to vote."²

Thus, in every case where the position of the urban patriciate, and its consequent ability to provide the money and troops to wage the war was threatened, the Crown emerged as its champion. The nobility had been reduced in political importance by the mere existence of this alliance and the great and growing resources made available to the Crown as a consequence of it. The urban patriciate, on the other hand was a far better political ally for the Crown than the nobility ever had been simply because it could not think in national political terms. While the nobles could - and did - think of doing away with the monarchy and replacing it by a coalition of nobles it would take three centuries before a European middle class had such a revolutionary idea about its own political role.

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 19 July 1485, f.144, September 1492, f.271.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 25 February 1492, f.221.

CHAPTER VIRELATIONS WITH THE URBAN PATRICIATE
PART II: THEIR DRIVE TO POWER IN THE CITY

In the nine years 1480-89 the urban aristocracy benefitted greatly from its position as the main ally of the monarchy. In return for its support of the war and of war taxation the crown tolerated its takeover of common lands, hereditary office holding, and speculation of public funds despite complaints from the pecheros. At the same time, fearing the growing power of its new allies, the monarchy increased the number of corregidores, seeking in this way to put the government of major towns under direct control.

However, soon after the start of the war the crown found it almost impossible to take a firm stand against the urban patriciate even if it involved the defence of its own officials. The revolt of the city council of Jerez de la Frontera against the government of its corregidor Juan de Robles which led to the complete destruction of corregidorial government for a brief period in 1483 was a clear case of this impotence in the face of determined pressure from an important segment of the urban patriciate. Instead of punishing the offending regidores with prison, loss of property or exile as was done with Count Rodrigo Osorio in 1486 the crown succeeded in reinstating Roble's officials only after making humiliating concessions. In Murcia, which had very nearly refused to accept a corregidor in 1478, the corregidor was forced to swear to adhere to a series of requirements and prohibitions that became more onerous as time went on. When Juan de Robles himself returned to Jerez

in 1488 he not only found that he had been stripped of many of his most valuable privileges but that his salary was reduced and his ability to revenge himself on his enemies within the city sharply curtailed.

The corregidor was not the only representative of crown authority to suffer during the last years of the war. The francos del alcazar a body of wealthy pecheros who were responsible to the crown for the upkeep of municipal fortifications had long enjoyed tax exemptions. In at least two cases, Jerez and Cordova, these exemptions were swept away in 1489. Even the most important representative of the crown in the north, the Viceroy of Castile Pedro Fernandez de Velasco Count of Haro could not defend himself against the hostility of the regidores of Burgos. Finally, he was forced to withdraw to Valladolid with his council after trying vainly to impose his jurisdiction on them. By the early 1490's complaints of the arbitrariness and corruption of regidorial government coming from Salamanca and Leon illustrate in a general way their almost absolute power in many places.

Aside from desiring to extend their power within city government and increase their property at the expense of the pecheros the main goal of the late fifteenth century urban patriciate was the expulsion of the Jews. This occurred because of the changed composition of the urban aristocracy since the middle of the century. The forced conversion of thousands of Spain's industrious Jewish population to Christianity from 1391 had the effect of throwing open municipal offices to them. This development coincided with the general expansion of the Castilian economy in the fifteenth century, when Jewish expertise in commerce and

finance were in heavy demand, thus affording these conversos an extraordinary opportunity to amass wealth, become caballeros contiosos and rise into the expanding christian urban aristocracy. Gradually the interests of the Jews and conversos diverged until, by the middle of the century, a group of intellectual converso anti-Semites had emerged. The growing power of conversos on Castilian city councils combined with the position of the Jews as direct vassals of the crown made these councils generally hostile to their continued presence in the city. By the late 1470's a gradual campaign against the Jews was taking shape in the cities that was aimed directly at their expulsion. At first the Jews could count on the crown's protection but as the war continued and the crown's dependence on the urban patriciate deepened the crown could no longer intervene effectively. By 1489, its authority was being openly flouted and it was forced to give way to the pressure from the cities and permit the passing of discriminatory ordinances against Jews that made their life in the city an impossibility. In 1492 they were expelled.

The development of this drive to power by the urban aristocracy which reduced the power of the crown's local representatives and threatened the existence of Jewish communities coincided with a financial crisis involving both ordinary and extraordinary rents. Resistance by towns like Jerez to the ever increasing demands of tax-farmers, the enormous growth of mercedes sold to pay the expenses of war and the unexpectedly high cost of maintaining Castilian control of the kingdom of Granada all served to turn the once healthy surpluses of the ordinary income account into a deficit. At the same time, trouble could be

anticipated in the extraordinary accounts. The Crusade, which had yielded so much vitally needed revenue during the war was interrupted in 1491 and would never again yield the revenues of the war years. The special hermandad subsidy was also interrupted from 15 August 1492 so that the crown could anticipate a fall in revenue from that source of some 24,132,381 maravedis for the next fiscal year.

The ending of the war in Granada increased rather than decreased the crown's difficulties. Granada itself, which had long been coveted by christian monarchs because of its fabled wealth proved to be a money loser and in order to meet the expenses of maintaining garrisons there funds had to be taken from the already overburdened "ordinary" income accounts.

There was also the distinct possibility of a renewal of private wars among the nobility that could lead to a direct challenge to crown authority as had already occurred with the exiled Count of Lemos. A dangerous situation that developed in the province of Vizcaya in 1491-92 after a crown official had favoured one group of local nobles over another, gave warning of the still vast power of nobles to cause trouble in the areas of their greatest dominance. In Andalusia, the hostility between the Duke of Medina Sidonia and the Marquis of Cadiz had erupted into violence with an armed attack made by the Duke's soldiers on a fishery owned by the Marquis. By June 1492 the crown was warning its chief officials in the province to be on guard against the possibility of an outbreak of private wars that could involve all the nobles in the province.

The political and financial crisis that developed at the end of the

war caused the crown to seriously consider undertaking a discoveries policy that could yield important revenues free of political strings. However, its earlier efforts to compete with the Portuguese in African trade and exploration had failed. The only way left open to the "land of the spices" was west. With the conversion of the crown's top financial and political advisers to backing this policy because of the difficult situation in which the crown found itself the first Columbian expedition was assured.

Jerez de la Frontera, from which much of the documentation used in Chapter VI comes, affords a fine field of investigation for historians interested in studying the social and political history of fifteenth century Spain. In contrast with other cities of Castile its municipal archives have an almost complete series of Actas Capitulares for the last three decades of the century. These "Actas" are the minutes of city council meetings and in Jerez these are fine, large volumes with complete copies of all royal letters sent to the city along with the almost verbatim replies of the city council and the opinions of all the regidores. The completeness of the records preserved in Jerez is in sharp contrast to other Castilian cities and accounts for the preponderance of information from Jerez in Chapter VI. Since this is the case the description of a "drive to power" by the urban aristocracy, while convincing for Jerez itself must be taken with some reservations for the rest of Castile if only because the lack of documents precludes any general conclusions. However, if the evidence presented in Chapter VI concerning the urban aristocracy's successful attempts to reduce the

power of the corregidor and his officials is considered along with the financial gains made by this class through the war and through taking over common land as described in Chapter V a convincing general picture of the rising power of this class emerges.

Jerez itself was the most important and populous city of the archbishopric of Cadiz. In 1431, its population was more than three times larger than its nearest rival Sanlucar de Barrameda. Jerez had some 10,136 vecinos while Sanlucar had 2,953. In the same census Cadiz itself had only 316 vecinos while Puerto de Santa Maria had 1,660 and Rota 842.¹

Furthermore, Jerez's system of fortifications and well organized city militia made it the centre of regional defence against the Moors. Throughout the middle ages the city itself had served as a refuge for local farmers while the regional fortresses under its control became focal points for agricultural development. Sidueña, one of these fortresses located on the river Guadalete served to protect the trade that flowed along it from Puerto de Santa Maria.² Jerez's general economic development during the fifteenth century (described in Chapter VII) followed the lines of general development in Castile so far as can be told from the scanty documentation available.

Despite a gradual increase in the number of corregimientos during the reign, relations between corregidor and cabildo could often be

1. H. Sancho de Sopranis, Historia Social de Jerez de la Frontera, (Jerez, 1959), p.84.

2. Ibid., p.28.

strained and difficult. Some of the complaints brought against the corregidor were quite justified. For one thing, corregidorial government was quite expensive. The corregidores of Seville, Toledo and Cuenca collected 420,000, 320,000 and 219,000 maravedís respectively,¹ while Juan de Robles, corregidor of Jerez de la Frontera, received a salary of 224,000 and his alcalde 110,000.² Where these charges were paid out of the propios and taxes of the city, as occurred in Jerez, they represented a grave burden on cities already overburdened with war servicios.

In addition to their salary, the corregidor and his servants were entitled to other privileges, including the right to receive linen and other bedclothes from the town. They also expected to obtain free housing for their entire term of office. In 1459, corregidor Diego Martines de Avila obtained free housing and bedclothes for himself and fifty five men.³

Corregidorial government was also corrupt government, and the costs of that corruption had to be borne by every citizen who needed the assistance of an alcalde and every merchant bringing goods to the city. A royal cedula issued in response to the complaints of several Murcian regidores stated that neither the corregidor nor his alcaldes were charging the rates for their services that were called for in local regulations:

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.344.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1483 ffs. 96v-97.

3. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 25 November 1459.

You the corregidor and your alcaldes and alguaciles and the escribanos do not respect the fees set down in the rate book of the said city and exceed it by very large amounts. 1

The royal prohibition on charging excessive fees that was issued on this occasion seems to have had little effect, because five years later the cabildo was forced to act against the alguacil mayor who was collecting 100 maravedís per league from litigants for any official trips he had to make on their behalf.

Merchants of all types were also subjected to the exactions of corregidorial officials. The account of a cabildo meeting held on 31 March 1483 in Jerez reveals that a local customs official appointed by the corregidor had been collecting "tres o quatro derechos" instead of the rate he was entitled to. Other corregidorial officials had collected excessive fees from merchants entering the city to sell horses, tavern-keepers, and fishmongers. Even the olive groves were not being properly protected from shepherds. Corregidorial guards were accepting bribes to allow sheep to be pastured in them, despite the harm this caused to residents.²

Basically, the reason for the tension between the corregidor and his officials and the cabildo did not lie in the undoubted corruption of corregidorial government but in the very existence, within the same

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1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Cartas Reales, 1478-88:
Vos el dicho corregidor, e vuestros alcaldes, e alguaciles, e los escribanos no guardades ny guarden los derechos que estan tasados por la tabla e alcanzal de la dicha cibdad e que excedeys muy mayores contias de maravedís.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 31 March 1483, ff. 96v-97.

locality, of two powers representing two conflicting interests: the Crown and the urban patriciate. In Jerez, the high salaries collected by the corregidor and his alcaldes and the endemic corruption of his government were to become the rallying point for all those members of the cabildo wishing to change the balance of power in the city and establish the preponderance of the regidores. This desire was to produce the most serious and consequential revolt of the post-civil war period.

Relations between the Jerez cabildo and its president Juan de Robles had been deteriorating since January 1483. On 3 January a movement, backed by a considerable number of regidores had attempted to suppress collection of the novena del vino a sales tax that brought in 170,000 maravedís a year. If this tax was not collected, Robles' salary could not be paid, because income from the propios only amounted to 30,000 maravedís. On this occasion Robles was able to rally the majority to his side by threatening them with the penalties contained in a royal letter he had received ratifying his salary demands. However, the vote and the opinions expressed by the members showed that many of the most important regidores were in open revolt against his authority.

The real chance of the anti-Robles party came after a heavy defeat that was suffered by a Christian (mainly Andalusian) army in the Ajarquias mountains of Granada. Juan de Robles was captured during the battle while acting in his capacity of leader of the Jerez militia.

Going into immediate special session in the afternoon of 26 March 1483, the cabildo members first swore an oath of secrecy. They then agreed to revive an obsolete and dubious local ordinance that gave the

cabildo the right to replace corregidorial officials when the corregidor himself was dead or captured:

It was then said that because of the loss of Juan de Robles this city was left without a corregidor or other person with the power to exercise justice. According to the privileges uses and good customs of this city she could now elect her own alcaldes mayores, alguacil mayor and the other posts occupied by the corregidor. ¹

Despite a certain amount of disagreement about the validity of the ordinance voiced by Pedro de Avila and others, it was adopted in order to "give the city relief from the injustices of corregidorial government". ²

The cabildo then acted to dismantle the edifice of corregidorial power. First, Robles' wife was requested to surrender control of the city gates to alcaldes drawn from the ranks of the regidores themselves. On her refusal, troops under the command of a new alcalde were sent to each of the gates with orders to seize them from the corregidor's officials by force if they encountered any resistance. Arriving at the gate of Saint James, the forces sent from the cabildo demanded its surrender. This was agreed to by its alcalde, Juan de Lillo, who declared:

that he held the gate for Juan de Robles his lord and that

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1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, 26 March 1483, ff.89v-90:
Fue luego dicho que a cabsa del dicho perdemyento del dicho senor corregidor Juan de Robles esta cibdad quedava syn corregidor e persona que justo poder oviese para usar e excercer la justicia e que segund los prevyllejos, usos, e buenos costumbres desta cibdad era a ella de poner e elegir sus alcaldes mayores, e alguacil mayor, e alcalde de la justicia e asy mysmo los alcaldes ordinarios que el corregidor tenya ocupados.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, 26 March 1483, ff.89v-90.

they should certify that they took it from him by force. And then he left the gate. 1

The same action was repeated at all the other gates with similar results and their custody was given over to one regidor and one jurado who were to receive the same salaries as Robles' alcaldes. (No attempt was made to save the city's taxpayers money here.) At the same time several steps were taken to increase the popularity of the cabildo with the general public - at the expense of the now defunct corregidorial government. The novena del vino was ordered to be suppressed permanently, and it was ordered that merchants wishing to import horses could do so free of the duty they normally paid to the "alcaldes de las entrugas". A drawing for municipal judgeships that was held among the regidores completed the destruction of the corregidorial government.²

By 14 April the cabildo felt itself strong enough to demand that Robles' alcalde mayor Juan de Pas and other suspended officials should submit to a pesquisa. The regidores took upon themselves the task, normally exercised by a Crown-appointed investigator, of calling witnesses against these officials:

Following the said laws the city orders that it be made known that any persons who feel themselves injured by the said corregidor, his judges or lieutenants, must appear before the

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1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 26 March 1483, f.93:
El qual respondio que el tenya la dicha puerta por el senor Juan de Robles e que le dyese para testimonio como ge les tomaron por fuerca. E luego se salio de la puerta.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 11 April 1483, f.115v.

alcaldes in order to demonstrate these complaints. 1

Meanwhile, several attempts were being made to end the illegal occupation of corregidorial posts by the regidores. The first of these, made on 3 April 1483 by the Marquis of Cadiz, D. Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, was an attempt, supported by the Crown, to appoint one of his servants to the post of alguacil mayor. This office, with powers roughly equivalent to those of a corregidor, had been granted to him by Henry IV on 8 August 1474. In 1478, when Juan de Robles was given the post of corregidor, Rodrigo withdrew from the alguaciladgo and, on 30 May 1482, received a merced of 100,000 juro to compensate him for his lost salary.² Now, owing to the fact that the city had acted to replace Robles' officials without even consulting the King and Queen, Rodrigo felt free to re-occupy his former position in similar fashion:

Kinsmen, gentlemen, I have learned that because of the capture of the corregidor Juan de Robles in Moorish territory, you have freshly filled the judicial offices. This change should not be made until the king and queen have been consulted and their will made known as was done in Seville; because of the way that you have seen fit to deal with the said offices, I am sending Anton de Cabrera, my alcalde mayor of Seville, with

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1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 14 April 1483, f.116v:

Syguiendo las dichas leyes e ordinances que este ciudad deve mandar e manda que sea pregonado publicamente que qualquier o qualesquier personas que asi syntieron ser agravyados de los dichos corregidor e sus jueses e lugartenientes parecece ante los senores allcaldes para que muestren qualquier agravyo.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 30 May 1482, ff.120v-121.

my power to use my office of alguaciladgo. 1

However, on 16 April a disgruntled Cabrera returned to the ayuntamiento complaining that despite the Marquis's letter granting him power to become alguacil mayor, the members of the cabildo had refused to recognize him. He went on to demand their recognition on pain of incurring the severe penalties prescribed in the original grant and confirmation and requested a copy of the voting record in order to demonstrate it to the Marquis and their Highnesses.²

Despite these fulminations Cabrera was never permitted to assume the post of alguacil mayor.

Crown intervention was, at first, almost as unsuccessful. At the beginning of the crisis Isabella had sent several letters (unfortunately missing in the records) which probably demanded the return of the seized posts to their rightful holders - the men appointed by Robles. We know about these letters from the demand for their execution put forward by Robles' "alguacil de la justicia" Juan de Pas. On 14 April 1483 Pas

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 7 April 1483, ff.118v-119:

Parientes, senores, he sabido que a cabsa de se aver perdido agora en tierra de moros my primo Juan de Robles corregidor de esta cibdad provestes nuevamente de los oficios de la justicia della. No se fisiera esta mudanca fasta lo consultar con el rey e la Reyna nuestros senores e saber la voluntad de sus altezas como se fiso en Sevilla. Yo, a esta caubsa, no he enviado poder a quien use my oficio de alguaciladgo mayor que yo en este cibdad tengo. E pues que este orden vos plogo tener de poner los dichos oficios de justicia, yo embio al bachiller Anton de Cabrera my allcalde mayor de Sevilla con my poder para usar el dicho my oficio de alguaciladgo.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 16 April 1483, ff.122v-123.

appeared before the cabildo and demanded that a royal letter ordering the return of the offices be obeyed:

And besides, I require of the said Alfonso de Vera and Juan de Ferrera alcaldes mayores and Pedro de Spinola alguicial mayor that they obey the said letter because it speaks especially of them and he required that they give to him and the other officials appointed by Juan de Robles when he left the varas of justice that they have and that if they do this they will be doing what they are obliged to do to obey the letter ... and at the same time I require them not to use the offices of alcaldes mayores and alguaciles mayores as the Queen's letter had ordered or incur the penalties listed there and at the same time I require that the said alcaldes mayores and alguacil and twenty-fours and jurados defend and order the "alcalde de la justicia" and alcaldes ordinarios that are in office not to use the said offices. 1

The majority of the cabildo, namely Alfonso Dias, Fernand Ruys, the alcayde Estevan de Villa Creces, Francisco de Corita, Gomes Patyno, Juan Riquel, Juan de Santiago, Pedro Dias, Gideon de Finajosa, Juan Bernal, Diego Gonzalez, Pedro Carmacho, Juan Sanches, Gomez Patino and Diego Gomez, merely asked for copies of the royal letter in order that they might consider "what would be most suitable to the service of God

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 14 April 1483, ff.117v-118:

E demas requyro a los dichos Alfonso de Vera e Juan de Ferrera allcaldes mayores, e Pedro de Spinola alguacil mayor que obedescan la dicha carta pues que con ellos especyalmente fabla e le require que la entregera a el e los otros oficiales que el dicho Juan de Robles, al tiempo que de este cibdad partio dexo las varas de la justicia que tenyan; e que asy mysmo les requyra e requyro que non usen ny exercuten los oficios de allcaldias mayores e alguaciladgo segund que la reyna nuestra senora, por su carta lo mando so las penas en la carta contenida, e asy mysmo requiro a los dichos senores que defendan mandan el allcalde de la justicia e allcaldes ordinarios que tyenen puestos, que no usen de los dichos oficios segund que la reyna por su carta lo enbia mandar.

This unusual insertion of the first person in this part of the Actas is an indication of the importance and gravity of Pas's declaration.

and of the King and Queen", while the lone dissenter declared that as he had not been in favour of the original seizure of corregidorial offices he felt that Robles' officers should "not be impeded in the exercise of their functions".¹

Finally a special envoy, the Licentiate Juan de la Fuente, had to be sent from court with a letter dated 27 April 1483 which demanded the discovery and arrest of all those responsible for the unauthorized seizure of offices and continual disobedience to previous royal orders:

We order you to investigate and know the truth as to who and whichever persons were those who joined to give the said varas and gates, and those that took them and did not want to obey nor complete our letters. And the truth known, capture those who took the said varas and gates without our orders and have held them without having our power or faculty for this and sequester all their property and offices and put everything in sequestration. 2

They were to be removed from the judicial offices that they had usurped and then brought before the King by Fuentes' officers.

With the Licentiate de la Fuente present, and the threat of an investigation hanging over them, the veintiquatros had to yield; and on 18 May 1483, Robles' officers once again assumed their posts under the

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 14 April 1483, ff.117v-118.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 27 April 1483, ff.136v-137:

Vos mandamos que fagays pesquisa e sepays la verdad a quien e qualesquier personas fueron las que se juntaron al dar de las dichas varas e puertas, e los que asy las tomaron e non quysieron obedescer ny complir las dichas nuestras cartas. E la verdad sabida prendays los cuerpos a los que ansy syn nuestro mandamiento tomaron las dichas varas e puertas e las han tenydo syn tener para ello poder ny facultad nuestra e asy presas les secrestreys todos sus bienes muebles e oficios e lo pongays todo en sequestro.

leadership of Juan de Pas.¹ Another blow fell when, on 15 August, Fuente was ordered to make a pesquisa into the conduct of the self-appointed judicial officers.²

However, despite the fact that the regidores of Jerez were guilty of destroying local corregidorial government and ignoring repeated Crown orders, the threatened punishment was never meted out. Rather, they were rewarded for their peaceful surrender of local judicial posts by the special permission obtained from the King by Juan de Pas to receive salinas. At the cabildo meeting of 7 July 1483, all the regidores prominent in the recently concluded rebellion were encouraged to request the salinas that had previously been denied them.³ Even Fuentes' investigation was called off. On 26 October 1483 a royal cedula arrived which stated that because of the many "services" that had been rendered by the regidores and the supplication of Robles' wife:

We order you not to make the said investigation and if it has begun not to proceed any further by virtue of it. 4

Thus, instead of losing their property because of their rebellion, the regidores saw it increased, and instead of losing their posts they were

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 18 May 1483, f.147v.
2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 15 August 1483, in f.140 of 1484.
3. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 7 July 1483, f.162.
4. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 26 October 1483, f.176:

Nos vos mandamos que non fagades la dicha pesquisa e sy esta comencada a faser sobresayes en ella y non procedayes por virtud della a cosa alguna.

continued in them. The contrast between the Crown's leniency toward the rebellious regidores of Jerez and its later hardness toward another rebel, the Count of Lemos, is a tribute to the changed power structure - the changed relative importance of urban patriciate and nobility that was even then apparent. By 1483, the Crown could not risk alienating the urban patriciate of such an important and strategic town as Jerez, especially after a major defeat. A rebellious noble, with many enemies, whose contribution to the war effort would have been minimal, could, by 1486, be attacked and exiled with relative impunity.

When Robles returned to Jerez (some time in 1487), to re-assume the pose of corregidor, he found that the position and power of corregidorial government had deteriorated in his absence and that despite his own efforts and Crown support it continued to do so.

During his captivity the cabildo had refused to respect the exemption of the thirty francos del alcazar. These men were appointed by the corregidor to see to the upkeep of the local fortification - out of their own pockets - in return for which they received almost complete exemption from both royal and municipal taxation. By guarding and repairing the alcazares they performed one of the most important services of corregidorial government in a frontier town like Jerez.

A royal cedula of 30 April 1487 records that:

After Juan de Robles was captured the exemption and freedoms of the 30 francos del alcazar were not observed by their city and they were placed on tax rolls to pay all the taxes that were ordered collected ... and because of this the

alcazares had not been repaired. 1

The royal cedula ordered that if the francos had been sustained in their exemptions during the period of Robles' previous administration, they should be similarly treated during the present one.

However, when the francos, relying on this royal cedula, refused to pay in the next war repartimiento they found that the cabildo had no intention whatever of respecting it:

They paid the servicio that was assigned to them in the first month and now don't want to pay the second, claiming that their Highnesses' letter that just came declares that they do not have to pay the war servicio. This has never been sustained the said francos in the war servicios.

Messengers were sent to court in order to obtain a reversal of the royal order. Meanwhile the collection of the war servicio could wait:

Until their Highnesses' declaration on this subject arrives we must have forbearance in the collection of this month's servicio. 2

At the same time the francos were warned by members of the cabildo that it would be advisable for them to pay the servicio anyway. It

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 30 April 1489, f.34:

Despues que el dicho Juan de Robles fue captado por esta cibdad no ha seydo guardado a los dichos treynta francos las franquesses e libertades de que devyan gozar ponandoles por los pechos que en esa cibdad sean fechos, e a cabsa de lo qual los dichos alcazares no ha seyto reparados.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 17 June 1489, f.75v-76:

Pagaron el servycio que les fue repartido el mes primero e agora non quieren pagar el segundo diziendo que la carta de sus altezas que agora vino se declara que non ayan de pechar en el dicho servycio de la guerra, lo qual a los dichos francos jamas se les guardado en los servycos de la guerra ... Y por este mes devria aver paciencia en cumplir el servycio fasta ser venyda la dicha declaracion de sus Altezas.

was strongly intimated that they could be arrested if they refused.

The cabildo was playing its trump card - the possible slowing up or stopping of "war servicios". As Jerez paid something like 1,500,000 maravedís per month toward war expenses and sent larger quantities of foodstuffs and troops, non-co-operation on her part could have serious repercussions. The Crown had no choice but to agree to their demand that the francos pay war servicios, despite repeated royal orders to the contrary. Ferdinand wrote:

I declare that the exemptions and liberties of the said francos of the said alcazares of this city are not understood nor extended concerning the taxes, contributions and loans of the said war of the Moors, rather that all of them pay and contribute in the contributions, taxes and loans of the said war just as the other citizens of the city. 1

By 1489 Cordoban francos del alcazar had already lost their freedom from war taxation and were now fearful of discrimination against them by their political enemies in the making up of tax-rolls. A cedula addressed to the jurados of the collacion of "Sant Bartolome", where the francos must have resided, records that:

You know that the francos of the old alcazar have made representations to us saying that because some of you feel enmity and hatred toward them they fear that they will be hurt, throwing more on them than they should rightfully

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1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 10 July 1489, ff.107v-107:

Declaro que las franquezas e libertades que los dichos francos de los dichos alcazares de esa dicha cibdad non se entienden ny estienden en quanto toca a los repartimientos servycios e enprestidos de la dicha guerra de los moros antes que todos ellos pechan e paguen e contribuyan en los servycios e derramas e enprestidos de la dicha guerra segund que los otros vecinos de la dicha cibdad.

pay in the war servicios. 1

Far more important in establishing the supremacy of regidorial as opposed to corregidorial government in Jerez was the series of royal cedulas gained by the cabildo after the pesquisa of 1488. These cedulas not only mark a watershed in the battle for supremacy between cabildo and corregidor because of the reduction in corregidorial power contained within them but were also designed to prevent its revival after the departure of pesquisador Alvaro de Porras, by making it impossible for Robles to take vengeance on his political enemies.

On its conclusion, the pesquisa was brought to court by two paid representatives of the cabildo, Diego Gomez de Vera, a regidor and juardo Fernando de Herrera. These men gave it to the court fiscal (attorney general), Pedro Dias de la Torre, who, in expectation of a fee on the successful conclusion of the business agreed to prepare a summary (relacion) of its criticisms of Robles' government and demands for reform for presentation to the Queen. This he did, and obtained several notable successes for which he was paid 5,000 maravedís.²

The advantages gained by the regidores on this occasion are of two types: reduction in the funds and goods coming to the corregidorial

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 29 July 1489, f.122: Sepades que por parte de los francos del alcazar viejo desa dicha cibdad nos fue fecha relacion diziendo que a cabsa que vosotros o alguno de vos teneys a ellos alguna odio e emnestad se temen que en los repartimientos que fizieredes para la guerra les agravyeren echandoles mas de lo que de razon deven.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1489, ff.143v-144.

administration and sharp limitations placed on Robles' judicial power and staff. In terms of finances, the corregidor himself was hardest hit by a heavy reduction in his fee for the tenancy of the city gates. The fee was reduced from 20,000 maravedís per gate to 5,000, thus saving the city 60,000 maravedís.¹ His salary was also reduced to 180,000 maravedís from 224,000 in 1483. In addition, it was ordered, in a cedula dated 22 March 1490, that fines collected from persons who were found to have violated city ordinances were to go to the city, after having been collected by the corregidor since Robles came to power.² Another long-standing corregidorial perquisite that was eliminated after the 1488 pesquisa was the right to demand free bedclothing and accommodation for himself, his alcaldes and their retainers. This right, recognised by Jerez since at least 1459, was removed in a cedula received on 22 September 1489. Henceforth the corregidor was ordered:

Do not take clothing or accommodation for yourself, nor for your alcaldes and alguaciles, excepting only accommodation for which you pay the owners yourselves. 3

This time the Crown was merely recognizing a fait accompli, for when Robles returned to the city in January 1487 he complained:

You do not want to give accommodation nor clothing for his

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1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1489, ff.143v-144.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1490, f.140v-141.
 3. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1490, f.71-72:

Non tome ropa ny posadas para vosotros ny para vuestros alcaldes e alguaciles salvo solamente posadas pagando los alquelyes a los dueños della.

retainer in the same way as it was traditionally given to other corregidores of the said city ... in this he says that he has received great injury and harm. 1

In a cedula that directly increased the local power of the urban patriciate while sharply decreasing the scope of corregidorial government, the Crown ordered a reversion to the system of election of alcaldes ordinarios from among caballeros de contia (knights with certain property qualifications who had performed notable services). These alcaldes were to be elected from each collacion and were to be given jurisdiction only over civil cases.²

Prudently, the regidores made sure to guard themselves against any resurgence of corregidorial power. This could occur in one of two ways: either through the Crown's conveniently forgetting about the pesquisa or losing it - and thus not enforcing the resultant cedulas; or by Robles taking revenge on individual regidores by discriminating against them in criminal cases. The former had already occurred during a previous pesquisa into Robles' conduct mounted by the Licentiate de Lillo so that the city's representatives at court advised:

The city must have an authorized copy of the entire investigation. This could cost as much as 100 reales according to what was told them there but the city should have this in its power because it would be very useful if the original were lost so that the city would not remain

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1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 11 January 1487:
no le quereys dar posadas ny ropapara los suyos segund se ha acostombrado dar a los otros corregidores desta dicha cibdad, en lo qual dyse que recibe gran agravyo e dano.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 2 March 1490, ff.140-141.

without recourse as occurred with the other pesquisa that was made against the said Juan de Robles, because according to the information they received from an escribano Gonzalez de Cordoba they don't even remember the last investigation here. ¹

Robles' own power to hit back at his political enemies in the city was also sharply curtailed. A cedula received in Seville on 17 March 1490 ordered that if prejudice was alleged against him by one of the parties in a criminal appeal he had to take two regidores as judges to sit with him. This was needed to allay the fears of "Algunos regidores e jurados" that "for the hatred or bad will that you have against them that they will be harmed when you come to deal with criminal cases involving them." ²

After these victories the cabildo felt itself strong enough to reimburse its members out of public money for the expenses (travel, purchase of copies, bribes) they incurred during the pesquisa. When Robles, on his return to the city, attempted to force them to disgorge

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1490, ff.144v-145:

Que la cibdad devia sacar e tener el traslado del proceso de la dicha pesquisa. E podria costar fasta cient reales segund que alla ovo ynformacion en aquello. E aquella la cibdad devia tener en su poder sy por caso la original se pierdiese por que en este negocio la cibdad non quedese syn remedio como quedo de la otra pesquisa contra el dicho Juan de Robles en tiempo del doctor de Lillo segund alla les dixo goncalo de cordova su escribano se avya perdido la memoria de la dicha pesquisa.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1490 ff. 141v-142:

Que se temen que por odio o mal querencia que con ellos e con otras personas vesynos desa cibdad teneyes a causa de la resydencia e pesquisa vos conoceres de los dichos sus pleitos e negocios crimynales que ante el dicho vuestro alcalde de la justicia pasara, que fuera apelado e que sy asy pasase que ellos rescriberia en ello grand agravyo e dano.

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these funds, the regidores appealed to the Crown, which responded by not only ordering that the 5,000 maravedís taken from arrendador Fernando de Madrid be retained by the regidores but that Robles should:

find out their true expense over and above the said 5,000 maravedís and then cause them to be paid out of the rents of the city. 1

As a way of keeping pressure on him, the cabildo even delayed payment of Robles' own salary. On 5 February 1490 Pedro Fernandes Pinchon arrendador of the almojarifadgo of Jerez came to the cabildo to complain that Robles had ordered that the part of his salary owing out of that rent collected from Pinchon himself. He protested that his farmers had not paid the amounts demanded because:

They were told by the city not to pay anything to the said Juan de Robles until the city ordered it. 2

In Murcia resistance to corregidorial government took a different form than in Jerez. Here, after an initial refusal to accept a corregidor at all, the city made him swear to a number of conditions that tended to reduce or contain his power.

On 28 February 1482 Diego de Carvajal was returned to Murcia as corregidor over the objections of the cabildo. As a condition for accepting him he had to swear not to violate the privileges of certain

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1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 17 March 1490, f.194:
Averiguades las costas que verdadamente han fecho e gastado sobre los dichos 5,000 maravedís e se les hagades luego pagar de los propios e rentas desa cibdad.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 5 February 1490, f.42:
Les fue mandado por parte de Xerez que no pagasen maravedís algunos al dicho Juan de Robles fasta la cibdad lo mandasen.

members of the urban aristocracy who were caballeros but exempt from the obligation to have horse and arms. He also had to swear that he would not prosecute crimes committed before the beginning of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella and that he would not allow himself to be re-appointed after his present term of office had expired.¹ When Carvajal attempted to gain a third term the cabildo sent Juan de Ayala and Alonso Avellan to court as its representatives. They succeeded in obtaining a new corregidor for the city.²

Rodrigo de Mercado, who was appointed as Carvajal's successor on 12 June 1484, was also presented with a set of conditions that he had to swear to before being admitted by the city. He had to swear not to accept royal orders appointing certain private persons as judges in particular cases as "this prejudiced the jurisdiction of this city". Furthermore, it was stipulated that:

Besides he must not allow the alcaldes and alguaciles that he takes during his term of office to be present in the city hall without having been called there.³

The next corregidor, Mosen Juan Cabrero, who was appointed in November 1487 had to agree to abide by all of the above as well as several other humiliating requirements that were more damaging to corregidorial prestige than anything coming before. He had to surrender

1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 28 February 1482.
2. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 28 February 1483.
3. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 14 June 1484:
"Otrosy que no consentare al allcalde e alguasyles que toman durante su oficio que se asyenten en el ayuntamiento estando en concejo sy no fueren llamados."

all papers pertaining to criminal cases to municipal judges after his term of office was ended - leaving it to the city if further action was to be taken. His knowledge of civil cases was also strictly limited. In addition the city made sure that he did not extend his field of action into the surrounding countryside (where the regidores were engaged in taking over the best of the common lands). He was to swear that "neither he nor his officials would interfere with the work of the alcaldes de la huerta".¹

An investigation made by Juan de la Hoz a regidor of Segovia in 1487 showed how little corregidorial government had affected the power and practices of the Murcian regidores since 1478. Hoz found that all municipal offices were divided up between the partisans of two parties of regidores who "did not punish them even if they were in error". Many of the above offices, such as the escribanias which were held by relatives or allies of the regidores, were actually being rented to other persons. Hoz also found that the regidores and other powerful persons were taking over the Campo de Cartagena and other common land.²

In response to the Hoz investigation the crown ordered the suspension of two regidores: Juan de Ayala and Juan Vicente. However, after representations were made by the city the crown ordered the two to be reinstated.³ This had the effect of nullifying the work of Hoz and

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1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 27 November 1487.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, "Cartas Reales" 1478-1488, 4 April 1487, ff.210-211v.
 3. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, "Cartas Reales" 1478-1488, 31 January 1488, f.210.

so the regidores continued their practices unhindered.

By 1492 the position of the regidores had become so strong that they could afford to ignore the corregidor entirely. On 29 October the crown sent a letter to the Murcian cabildo complaining that they were spending money from the propios "without consulting the corregidor".¹

Contempt for the crown's chief local representative led to contempt for the authority of the crown itself. Anton Martinez de Aguilera who took the residence of corregidor Juan Cabrero in 1492 not only found that the regidores had been granting themselves jurisdiction over places in the district but that they had even been founding Moorish communities on their land without royal permission:

Some persons have been founding Moorish villages in the district and claiming that the jurisdiction is theirs and fining persons living in the said villages if they have committed crimes. The said fines pertain to our treasury and the jurisdiction to our justices of the said city. ²

Although scanty documentation for the period makes it difficult to establish the existence of a general trend, several other cases of aggression by regidores against corregidores or those acting for them have come down to us from the late 1480's and 1490's. In 1492, Sepulveda's juez de residencia Gonzales Tello was driven from the city

1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, "Cartas Reales" 1484-1495, 29 October 1492, f.33.
2. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 14 October 1492, f.49:
 "Algunos vecinos tyene fechos algunos poblados de Moros in el termyno della e dysen que es suya la jurisdiciony lieven penas a las personas que en los dichos poblados cometen algunos delitos las quales dichas penas pertenescen a nuestra camera e fysicio e la jurisdiccion a la dicha cibdad e a las nuestras justicias della."

by certain of its regidores as he was completing his investigations into municipal offices.¹ In the same year the regidores of Toledo refused to admit the corregidor's right to hear cases of the first instance:

You know that we have been told that you, the said regidores want to claim that the said corregidor cannot intervene in any case that comes before you in the first instance. 2

The situation in Alcala la Real had long been difficult for the crown's representatives. After disturbances in the city during 1489 Alfonso de Aguila was sent to investigate and take over the city's offices. However, on 5 May 1489 he had to be withdrawn because of the opposition of certain of the city's regidores:

Relation has been made to us by certain regidores of the city that the licenciado Alfonso de Aguila has shown himself hateful and suspicious against some of the said regidores. 3

Things seem to have been quieter in the city after the withdrawal of Aguila until 1492 when its new corregidor Bartolome de Santa Cruz was murdered. On 18 July 1492 Gonzalo Gomez del Castro was sent to the town to take the suspects to court after the alcalde de Castro, who acted as crown investigator, "went to the city and apprehended certain regidores and jurados". The crown however found it impossible to hold these men

1. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 13 September 1492, f.239.

2. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 10 August 1492, f.174:

Sepades que a nos es fecha relacion que vos los dichos regidores queryes desyr que vos el dicho corregidor non podeyes conocer de nynguna cabsa que ante vos venga en prymera ynstancia.

3. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 5 May 1489, f.243:

Por parte de ciertos regidores de la dicha cibdad nos es fecha relacion que el dicho licenciado de Aguila sea mostrado muy odioso e sospechoso contra algunos de los dichos regidores.

and ordered them sent home in order to spare them the costs of maintaining themselves at court.¹

In 1484 the crown had ordered the city of Cuenca not to make any payments from the propios without the signature of the corregidor or his assistant. This decision had to be reversed in the face of heavy regidorial opposition. On 20 November 1485 the crown agreed that these payments could be made without the corregidores' signature as long as he had been consulted.²

The corregidor, although the most important, was not the only representative of national authority to suffer during the war. Captains who were directly dependent on Alonso Enriquez, Admiral of Castile and enjoyed much the same tax exemptions as Robles' francos del alcazar were complaining of being included in tax by 1489. Sancho Japre, one of the Admiral's pages, was sent to Jerez in November of that year in order to make representations on their behalf. He not only complained that they were being taxed in an unprecedented way, but that some of them had even been jailed for non-payment. Furthermore, two of the Admiral's nominees to fill vacancies in their ranks had not yet been accepted by the cabildo, despite the Admiral's continual requests.³

Even the Constable of Castile, Pedro Fernandez de Velasco, Count of Haro, could not escape suffering indignities at the hands of the

1. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 18 July 1492, f.82.

2. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 20 November 1485, f.31.

3. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 27 November 1489, ff.165v-166.

regidores of Burgos, his own home city. At the time of his greatest power and responsibility, when he was made co-Viceroy of Castile and Leon, (a position he shared with the Admiral a year after the outbreak of hostilities with Granada), he was refused accommodation for himself and his officials.¹ So acrimonious did relations become between Constable and Cabildo that he was forced to withdraw with his council to Valladolid, where they resided until June 1491.²

The great power of Castilian regidores during the last years of the war in Granada is shown by several petitions that were sent to court by pecheros. In Avila the pecheros complained that the regidores had placed sisas on most essential foodstuffs. Although some of these were being used to pay for the Hermanidad:

The rest of the sisas that they share out in the city that can value 150,000 maravedis they say that they don't know what they spend them on except that in things that are convenient to the regidores.³

A complaint by Benito Lopes carpintero of Leon illustrates the absolute power of the regidores of that city. They had refused to allow him or his relations or their representatives to enter the cabildo to present petitions relating to matters concerning them and had declared that "they are the city and that neither he nor his parents nor the

1. Serrano, op. cit., p.223.

2. Ibid., p.253.

3. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 12 March 1489, f.342:

Todos las otras sisas que en la dicha cibdad se echa y reparte que diz que puede valer 150,000 maravedis diz que non sabe que se hasen dellos ny en que se gasten salvo que las cosas que a los regidores conviene.

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hidalgos of the city could intervene in its government". He complained that he and his relations had been treated not as citizens but as vassals of the regidores who behaved as if the city and its inhabitants belonged to them.¹

Thus, the war years reveal the urban patriciate's growing success in consolidating and expanding its local power at the expense of pecheros, corregidorial administration and local appointees of great nobles. This successful "drive to power" posed a serious threat to the survival of an important and special community - the Jewish aljama - that had existed throughout Castile for hundreds of years. Their special position as direct dependents on the Crown, their exemptions from local taxation and war servicios and their general unpopularity made them even more logical targets for the urban patriciate than were the francos del alcazar. The mounting agitation against the Jews during 1480-92 which led inevitably to their expulsion, was inspired and directed by the Castilian urban patriciate. With the elimination of the Jewish aljama, one of the most important sources of Crown power in the cities was removed and the Crown's authority throughout Spain was gravely weakened.

1. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 21 July 1490, f.37.

CHAPTER VII

THE EXPULSION OF THE JEWS

In order fully to understand the reasons for the great expulsion of the Jews in 1492, about which so much has been written it will first be necessary to describe their unique social position in medieval Castile and how it developed.

Persecuted by the Visigoths and accused of aiding the Moorish invasion of 711, the Jews flourished under the benevolent rule of Moorish Kings and Princes. Adapting quickly to the language and customs of the invaders they soon made themselves useful as artisans, tax-collectors and financial experts, diplomats, judges, and physicians, while during the tenth century great Jewish figures in science and philosophy emerged. Foremost among these were men like Hasatoz ben-Shapirit (910-970), physician, finance minister and translator, Abraham ibn Ezra (1093-1167), Yehudah ha-Levi (1080-1140), and the Cordoban philosopher Maimonides (1135-1204).¹

With the Almoravide and Almohade invasions of the 11th and 12th centuries and the expanding Christian Reconquista, the position of the Jews in Moorish territory changed for the worse. Massacres, such as the one of 1066 in Granada, were increasingly frequent, causing many Jews to migrate to Christian lands. Many others passed under Christian jurisdiction through conquest. In this way large communities were taken over in Cordoba, Seville, Jerez and other Andalusian cities during the

1. Américo Castro, The Structure of Spanish History (Princeton, New Jersey, 1954), p.470.

reign of Ferdinand III.¹

By passing from Moorish to Christian jurisdiction, the Jews moved from the higher to the more primitive culture in the peninsula. To the simple agrarian and warrior culture of Christian Castile the Jews (along with the Mozarabs) were invaluable as transmitters of skills and knowledge acquired through long intercourse with the advanced Moslem societies of the South. They became indispensable as farmers and financial officers for Castilian monarchs, nobles, bishops and monasteries, exported and imported goods, lent money at interest and practised medicine and surgery as well as every conceivable trade. In Toledo aristocratic Jewish families like the Abviafia Ibn Shoshan and Ibn Zodak owned large southern estates and ran textile shops in Toledo, Seville and Cordoba, while the Jewish middle class produced and sold clothing.² However, the majority of Jews must have been artisans. A census taken by the cathedral chapter of Avila in 1306 shows church-owned houses occupied by many Jewish artisans, including a painter, two cobblers, two pack saddlers, a locksmith, a harnessmaker and a goldsmith. Among residents of Avila during the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were two Jewish dyers (1297), a scrivener (1301) and a silversmith and brazier in 1371. Other trades commonly practised by Jews were those of anchormaker, cutter, curtain-maker, scale-maker, apothecary, book-binder and gold broker.³

1. Américo Castro, The Structure of Spanish History, (Princeton, New Jersey, 1954), p.470.

2. Y. Baer, A History of the Jews in Christian Spain, I (Philadelphia, 1961), p.197.

3. Castro, op. cit., p.514.

Thus the importance of the Jews to the economic and commercial life of Castile and Aragon cannot be easily overestimated. Not only did they provide essential industrial and commercial techniques, but they played a dominant role in overall financial administration. So central was their position in tax-collecting by the fourteenth century that Christians were almost wholly excluded, as attested by Henry II of Trastamara's reply to the demand of procuradores at the Cortes of 1367, that he farm out the collection of back taxes to Christians:

To this we reply, that it is true that we farmed out the collection of the said income to Jews because we found no others to bid for it. 1

In the fifteenth century, even though the exclusive hold of Jews on royal taxation had been broken because of the rise of New Christians, Rabi Mayer and his converso associate, Luis de Alcala formed a company which collected some 50 per cent of Crown revenues and took care of paying all "ordinary" expenditures. 2

In the phrase "The law of the king is law, the law of the nation is not law unto us", the thirteenth century rabbi and religious thinker Ibn Adret expressed the relationship that prevailed between the Jewish communities, the Castilian monarch and the people during the entire later middle ages. 3 The Jews agreed that they were obliged to obey the commandments of the Christian king accepting the formula "the kings

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1. Cortes de los antiguos reynos de Leon y Castilla, RAH, II (Madrid, 1882), p.15. In Castro, p.499.
 2. Ladero, "La hacienda", op. cit., p.36.
 3. A.A. Neuman, The Jews of Spain. Their Social, Political and Cultural Life During the Middle Ages, (Philadelphia, 1944), p.13.

of the nations have domination over us" as Ibn Adret stated it, in return for which the kings were the guarantors of Jewish constitutional rights and their protection against nobles, clergy and local administrators.

Both the king and the Jews profited by this arrangement. The Jews could live according to their own religious laws, not only governing themselves but also regulating their daily conduct according to the precepts of their holy books. At the same time, the king had a numerically significant, highly-skilled segment of the population occupying key administrative positions in finance directly dependent upon him for military and legal protection, paying taxes directly to the Crown, and whose property was considered virtually as part of the royal patrimony.¹ The Jews, as Alfonso III expressed it, "are the king's men; all Jews are under the protection and safeguard of the King".²

As a consequence of the above arrangement, a Jewish aljama was virtually a law unto itself, within the town. By special royal permission a chartered community was set up which was allowed to have its own council, judicial officers, and executive officers who operated in accordance with special privileges granted to each aljama individually, and frequently revised. The various fueros (charters) issued to the aljama of Majorca illustrate the powers and immunities granted to the Jews by the middle of the thirteenth century.

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1. A.A. Neuman, The Jews of Spain. Their Social, Political and Cultural Life During the Middle Ages, (Philadelphia, 1944), p.14.
 2. Ibid., p.15.

Their right to reside in the community was first confirmed and then it was provided that in civil and criminal cases testimony of a Christian against a Jew would have to be supported by a Jewish witness. Jews were allowed to arrange the differences among themselves and could appeal directly to the King if they felt themselves abused by his officials. In 1269, fifteen years after the original fuero, another charter was issued which, while in some respects overlapping the first, conferred the right to purchase all types of property both in and outside of the city.

In internal organization the Kahal constituted itself along lines almost parallel with the internal organization of Spanish towns. The structure was oligarchical with a council made up of "elders" or berurium corresponding to Christian regidores.¹

Like them, the berurium found a way to make their offices the monopoly of a small number of families. In the fourteenth century the berurium of Barcelona passed a law which permitted them to retire to a closed conclave outside the city in order to select their successors. In this way, despite the vociferous protests of the Jewish middle class, the position of the oligarchy was preserved.²

The berurium and Jewish judges were not only responsible for organizing the payment of special Jewish taxes to the Crown, which amounted to 450,000 maravedís in 1492,³ besides loans and the castellanos

1. A.A. Neuman, The Jews of Spain. Their Social, Political and Cultural Life During the Middle Ages, (Philadelphia, 1944), p.35.
 2. Baer, op. cit., p.226.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, legajo 51 antiguo.

del oro, but had broad supervision over the entire religious, moral and economic life of the Jewish community. Offences for which fines could be imposed by the aljama of Burgos during the thirteenth century included assault, vilification, desecration of the Sabbath by doing violence to one another or forcing a Jew to testify in a Christian court, or by bearing arms. If a Jew was found riding an animal on the Sabbath he was fined and the animal confiscated for the Crown. Violation of community statutes, taking interest from a fellow Jew, and selling meat without a licence from the aljama were also offences for which fines had been imposed.¹

The arrangements whereby Jewish communities were allowed to reside in Christian Spain were of immense benefit to the Crown throughout the High Middle Ages. In a land where jurisdiction conflicted and rebellion against central authority was all too frequent the King could count absolutely on his Jewish tax-collector-financiers and administrators, because the very existence of these people and their right to live according to their own laws depended on his good will.

This mutually satisfactory arrangement was radically changed by the popular uprisings of 1391. The movement, which began in Seville, owing to anti-Semitic preaching by Archdeacon Ferran Martinez, soon spread all over Castile and Aragon. As it developed, it took on aspects of a general popular revolt against Royal authority. Not only were royal officials who tried to protect the Jews maltreated² but in

1. Baer, op. cit., p.235.

2. Jose Amador de los Ríos, Historia de los judíos de España y Portugal, (Madrid, 1876), 11, p.356.

Barcelona the Bayle General of the Kingdom of Aragon was sacked and tax-rolls burnt by the same angry crowd of sailors, labourers and idlers who had just destroyed the aljama. Even the municipal officials were attacked, when the crowd directed itself to the Consistory, and through its leader, Pedro Fas, demanded the removal of a local tax.¹

Altogether, thousands of Jews were killed and thousands of others were forced to accept baptism in order to save themselves. In some places entire communities were converted in a few years,² and in towns like Lerida, the remaining Jews, to escape further persecution, took baptism and renamed their synagogue the church of "Santa Maria del Milagro".³

The forced conversion of perhaps half of the total number of Jews left behind after the sack of their aljamas and large numbers who were converted more or less voluntarily in the first years of the fifteenth century was an event pregnant with consequences for the survival of the remaining Jewish communities. In a few decades the entire political, social and cultural map of Christian Spain was changed by the "New Christians" or conversos as they came to be called. The small Christian middle-class was now to receive a vast influx of recruits from the most culturally advanced section of the population, while the conversos' abilities in finance and commerce would allow many of them to rise from

1. Jose Amador de los Ríos, Historia de los judíos de Espana y Portugal (Madrid, 1876), 11, p.377.

2. Ibid., p.401.

3. Ibid., p.402.

the middle class to join the Christian urban patriciate because the expansion of the Spanish economy during the early fifteenth century offered them enormous potential gains.

The golden age of Spanish trade and manufacture was based first of all on the wool trade. With the appearance of the merino sheep in Southern Spain sometime between 1290 and 1310 the stage was set for the remarkable expansion of the production and export of raw wool that was to make Spain supreme in the markets of Flanders, France and Italy during the fifteenth century.¹

By the beginning of the fourteenth century Castilian merchants were already familiar sights in the great fairs of Champagne, Lille, Gravlines, Redon and Vitrée, while in 1303 the first entrance of Spanish wool into England is recorded.² However it was the Hundred Years War that really gave Castile its great opportunity in the Flemish market and led directly to its predominance in fifteenth century trade. This war which ranged England against two of its most important customers: France and Flanders gave the Castilians a virtual monopoly of these important markets. Only three years after the beginning of the war John VI of Brittany gave Vizcayan merchants important trading privileges which served to open all Brittany to their iron and wool. In the same year (1343) the count of Flanders agreed to the organization of Castilian trade in all the principle markets of his lands. In 1348 the wool trade had increased so

1. J. Vicens Vives, Manual de Historia Economica de Espana (Barcelona, 1959), p.232.

2. S. Sobreques, "La epoca del patriciado urbano", in Historia Social de Espana y America, ed. Vicens Vives (Barcelona, 1957), 11, p.319.

greatly that Castilian merchants opened the second of the foreign "factories" in Bruges (they were preceded only by the Hansa). With the treaty of London of 1351 which followed the disastrous English naval defeat of Winchelsea (1350) the English abandoned their attempts to obstruct Castilian trade with Flanders through the English Channel and the victory of the Castilians was complete.¹

Along with the development of the raw wool industry in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (some 2,700,000 head of sheep in 1467)² went the growth of a manufacturing industry specializing in the production of basic wool products such as blankets, yarn, wool sacks, and serge.³ Based at first on the four great centres of Avila, Segovia, Zamora and Soria the industry extended itself over the entire country by the mid-fifteenth century and even into Aragonese cities like Zaragoza, Huesca and Teruel whose large population of converso bankers and tax-farmers were in a position to provide it with capital.⁴ The growing power of the manufacturing interest was evidenced in the request at the Cortes of 1435 to prohibit the importation of foreign cloth on the grounds that in Castile they "make more and better ones each day".⁵ In the Cortes of 1438 the manufacturers demanded that the country's raw wool production be reserved for domestic manufacturers and not exported. This demand ran up against the opposition of all those who derived their income from the

1. Ibid., p.320

2. Ibid., p.232.

3. Ibid., p.292.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

raw wool export trade - especially the great nobles - and was defeated but the manufacturers won a partial victory twenty-four years later when Henry IV agreed to reserve one third of all raw wool produced for the home market.¹

In addition to wool cloth manufacture Spain had added, by the mid-fifteenth century an extensive silk industry in Talavera, Seville and Murcia as well as arms and ceramics. Seville was the focal point of Andalusian industry in this period, its soap industry alone producing an annual rent of 120,000 maravedis for its monopolies to the Enriquez.²

The Castilian merchant marine which received its first impetus from carrying wool and iron to Flanders and France had opened up three promising new fields for expansion by the mid-fifteenth century. In Andalusia, the conquest of the Canaries and the introduction there of sugar cultivation gave rise to an active commerce that resulted in a fall in the price of sugar in the peninsula.³ The Andalusian shipowner and merchant also derived considerable benefits from his developing trade in the Western Mediterranean. Alum imported by these merchants from Morocco was a common feature of the markets of Douai and Genoa from the fourteenth century.

During the same period merchants and shipowners from Vizcaya set about monopolizing the salt and dried fish production of the Atlantic and introducing these products into the Mediterranean. By the mid-fifteenth

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p.293.

3. Ibid., p.324.

century the Vizcayans had made themselves supreme in the carrying trade of the Western Mediterranean and the merchant colony that they maintained in Genoa was twice the size of that of any other nation.¹

The enormous advance of the Castilian economy during the fifteenth century made the fortune of many a Castilian city. Aside from the great prosperity of Seville based on its varied manufacture and trade, Medina del Campo achieved an extraordinary prosperity because of its great fair. Created by the monarchy in 1421 as the place where the wool trades payments were to be concentrated it soon became a centre for the monarchy's own transactions. Other places to benefit from the wool trade were Burgos, Valladolid which had a fair similar to that of Medina, Segovia, Bilbao and Zaragoza in the kingdom of Aragon.²

The economy of Jerez de la Frontera, whose municipal archives have yielded much of the documentation for this study, also expanded greatly during the latter part of the fifteenth century. While greatly hampered during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries by its exposed position on the frontier of Granada the conquests of the Prince of Antequera and Constable Luna during the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries which pushed the frontier beyond Ecija relieved Jerez of some of its defence responsibilities and enabled it to expand its promising agriculture and viticulture in safety.³

1. Ibid., p.326.

2. Ibid., p.341.

3. H. Sancho de Sopranis, Historia Social de Jerez de la Frontera I, (Jerez, 1959) p.23.

By the first decade of the fifteenth century this expansion was in full swing. It was based on the exploitation of four main products: grain, livestock, wine and fish. Despite the frequent occurrence of great scarcities of grain in Jerez itself (such as the one in 1473 in which it is recorded that starving animals had to be given straw from the roofs of peasants' houses),¹ Jerez was responsible for supplying grain to many nearby cities and villages and carried on an extensive export trade to Italy. During the decade preceding the Catholic kings, Jerez was actively engaged in selling grain to the city of Cadiz, the town of Puerto de Santa Maria, the Archbishopric of Cadiz and Bishopric of Malaga and the fortresses of Gibraltar, Castellar and Jimena.² From Puerto de Santa Maria Genoese merchants resident in that town would put the grain aboard Vizcayan ships for export to Italy.³

During this same period the wills of important persons, and treaties made with nearby Moorish towns reveal the growth of stock raising. Aside from the very large number of merino sheep in the region Jerez sold horses all over Spain and exported them to the Kingdom of Granada. A royal cedula of 22 November 1463 prohibiting the export of horses to Portugal reveals the importance of that market.⁴

A census made by the city for tax purposes in June 1491 reveals something of the flourishing nature of stock raising in the Jerez area.

1. Ibid., p.58.

2. Ibid., p.57.

3. Ibid., p.58.

4. A.M. Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 22 November 1463, f.18v in Sancho de Sopranis, op. cit., p.63.

The most important category of livestock was sheep with a total of 28,592 head; then came cows with 17,840. In addition to these some 1,662 mares were counted in the city and its vicinity.¹

Second only to grain cultivation in its importance to the city's economy was its wine-making. Although little is known about the quantities produced or sold, wine from Jerez was exported all over Spain and Europe by the last decades of the fifteenth century. Flemish merchants were especially active in this trade and a complaint from this important market in 1483 was enough to cause the passage of a series of regulations aimed at assuring the quality and reliability of exported wine. The ordinances stipulated that exports had to be sent in uniform size butts stamped with the seal of Jerez.² In addition to the Flemish, English merchants were active in the trade and also Italians residing in Puerto de Santa Maria.³

The fishing industry, highly organized in its own guild, was also very important to the economy of the city and its comarca. Jerez controlled four fisheries during the fifteenth century established at la Argamasilla, la Matagorda, Puerto Real and Casarejos. Although again little is known about this industry its success is attested by the violent envy of neighbouring towns. Several attacks on Jerez's fisheries are recorded, one on the one established at Casarejos that occurred on

1. Sancho de Sopranis, op. cit., p.62.

2. Ibid., p.79.

3. Archivo de Protocolos de Jerez de la Frontera, "Remembranca de notas de mi ferrnando de Carmona escrivano publico de la villa de puerto de Santa Maria", 8 October 1484, f.241v.

9 September 1467 and another particularly violent one on 13 February of that year which came from Cadiz.¹

The overall prosperity of Jerez and its region during the fifteenth century is attested by several factors. One of the most important of these is the general rise of population indicated by two census of the region that were taken for tax purposes in 1409 and 1431. Between these dates the pechero (tax-paying) population of Jerez rose from 8,885 vecinos to 10,136 vecinos for a gain of 1,251. Other important towns in the region recorded similar gains with Sanlucar rising from 2,610 to 2,953, a gain of 343 vecinos, Puerto de Santa Maria gaining 124 vecinos, and Rota with 78 more.²

Another indication of prosperity and therefore commercial importance of the region is the presence of important settlements of foreign merchants engaged in export trade. The Bretons were established locally in a community called Fortún de Torres and enjoyed freedom from taxation in San Lucar by 1466 in which year they requested the same privilege from Jerez.³ Even more significant, however, is the presence of members of some of the most important families of the merchant aristocracy of Genoa in Jerez and Puerto de Santa Maria. These men engaged in all types of trade and brought much needed sophistication to the rising economy of the region. The residence of a scion of the important di Negro family in Jerez by at least the mid-fifteenth century is shown by the authority

1. Sancho de Sopranis, op. cit., p.65.

2. Ibid., p.84.

3. Ibid., p.77.

given to Francisco de Negro in February 1468 by Gabriel Mysalla enabling him to export 3,000 cahises of grain. In this document de Negro is listed as a resident of Jerez.¹ The illustrious Spinola also chose to make their home in Jerez. The descendants of Gaspar Spinola Genoese ambassador to Castile, soon rose to prominence in Andalusia. Throughout the late fifteenth century they were regidores of Jerez and held other posts in towns of the region.²

In Puerto de Santa Maria an important notorial document entitled: "Remenbranca de notas de mi fernando de Carmona escrivano publico de la villa de puerto de santa maria" gives us much valuable information about the activities of Italian merchants in the area. In 1484 for example we find Jacomo Domestico "mercader genovese" lending money to ransom Cristobel Martinez who was a prisoner in Moorish territory as well as factoring the debts of Jeronimo Catano and engaging in the shipment of grain to Valencia.³ Other Italian merchants active in the port were: Luys Bonacorce who, on February 11, 1484, shipped a large consignment of wheat to Pisa and Genoa aboard a ship owned by Juan Dalday a shipowner of Bilbao,⁴ Bartolome Marcholin "mercader florentine" who sold slaves to Diego Dias in March 1484 and Bartolome Abarza a Genoese merchant who loaned the wife of Cristobal Martinez another part of the money that she

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p.88.

3. "Remenbranca de notas", 31 January 1484, f.132., 1 February 1484, f.133.

4. Ibid., 11 February 1484, f.144.

needed to ransom her husband.¹ That some of these merchants were beginning to transform themselves into landowners is shown by the purchase, on 2 April 1484, of a piece of land near Jerez by Francisco Dorno "mercader genovese" from D. Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, Duke of Cadiz.²

Although as the distinguished Spanish economic historian H. Sancho de Sopranis says, "the study of the economic life of our cities during the middle ages can be considered as virgin territory" from the little that is known of it the economy of Jerez de la Frontera seems to have shared in the general prosperity of Castile during the fifteenth century. Building on its prosperous agriculture and helped by the greater security afforded by the defeat of the Moors, Jerez and its area became a part of the international market with the assistance of Italian merchants and Vizcayan shippers. The size and growth of its population and the popularity of its annual fairs made Jerez the dominant city of the Archbishopric of Cadiz.

In almost all these places there were converso families which played important roles in the finances of the government and behind these must have been a host of merchants benefiting from the expansion of the Castilian and Aragonese economies. Burgos was the home of the Santamaria family, whose career will be discussed below, and whose founder was related to wealthy Jewish merchants, Segovia benefitted from the residence of Luis de Alcala, who with Rabbi Mayr rented the majority of the crown's ordinary rents as well as Luis de Santangal treasurer of the Hermendad

1. Ibid., 4 March 1484, f.156, 22 February 1484, f.147.

2. Ibid., 2 April 1484, f.171v.

during the reign of the Catholic Kings. The concentration of converso capital in Zaragoza helped to make it the most important commercial and financial centre of the kingdom of Aragon by the mid-fifteenth century.¹ In all these cities the conversos expertise in commerce plus the capital they obtained as tax farmers helped their rise into the urban aristocracy.

By the middle of the fifteenth century the conquest of important positions in Church and State by the New Christians was complete. Perhaps its course can be best observed if we take the example of one of the most famous converso families, the Santa Maria.

D. Pablo de Santa Maria was born Salomon Ha-Levi in Burgos of a family which, while no means wealthy, counted among its relations the Maluenda family, who were among the wealthiest merchants of the Jewish quarter.²

The boy early developed scholarly propensities and, after studying all the traditional subjects of the rabbinical candidate, soon became one of the most learned young rabbis in Castile. Before he had reached his 26th year, he founded an important school of Hebraic studies in his native city, which was soon attracting students from Castile, Aragon, Navarre and even Catalonia.³ At 20, he was raised to the post of Chief Rabbi of the Burgos aljama and all the Jewish communities of its bishopric. And, somewhat later, as a further tribute to his growing

1. Sobreques, op. cit., p.341.

2. R.P. Luciano Serrano, Los Conversos D. Pablo de Santa Maria y D. Alfonso de Cartagena (Madrid, 1942), p.10.

3. Ibid., p.11.

importance, and the trust placed in him by the Court, he was sent to London on an official mission some time between 1384 and 1385, with the object, no doubt, of objecting to the Duke of Lancaster's claim to the throne of Castile.¹

It was probably around the year 1388 that D. Salomon first began to read and become influenced by the writings of converted Jews like Alfonso de Burgos and Juan de Valladolid and that he began to have doubts about his own religious position. Whether strongly influenced by their writings or by the economic and political pressure that was building up against the Burgos community² he decided to convert and was baptised on 21 July 1390, just about a year before the sack of the Burjos aljama that took place in June 1391.³

During a sojourn at the university of Paris, where he gained a Doctorate of Christian theology, he became a firm friend of the Aragonese Cardinal, Pedro de Luna. Pablo was later invited to reside at the papal court in Avignon after Pedro was elected Pope Benedict XIII.

When Benedict came under heavy French pressure after Castile's withdrawal of allegiance in 1398, he hit upon the strategy of sending Pablo to Castile as his unofficial representative. By that time, in return for the services Pablo had rendered to him in Avignon, Benedict had created him canon of Seville and archdeacon of Trevino, while, on

1. R.P. Luciano Serrano, Los Conversos D. Pablo de Santa Maria y D. Alfonso de Cartagena (Madrid, 1942), p.15.

2. Ibid., p.16.

3. Ibid., p.27.

his return to the Castilian court (5 February 1399), Henry made him head chaplain.¹

Pablo's representations finally met with success when, at the end of 1402, Castile agreed to recognize Benedict's authority. In return for his efforts Benedict created him Bishop of Cartagena on 30 July 1403.²

Despite this position Pablo continued to reside at Court most of the time, and in 1405, after the birth of the future Juan II, he was appointed his chancellor and tutor. This position was confirmed to Pablo in Henry's will, in which he was given the post of canciller mayor to the new King for life, with an annual salary of 100,000 maravedís. Pablo was also confirmed in his post of tutor which he was to exercise until the young King had reached the age of 14. In April 1416, Pablo attained his highest distinction when he was appointed archbishop of Burgos, a post he held until his death on 30 August 1435.³

The great distinction and power in Church and State gained by Pablo de Santa Maria was nearly equalled by his second son, Alfonso Garcia de Santa Maria, who later called himself D. Alfonso de Cartagena. Alfonso, who succeeded his father as Archbishop of Burgos, was also a member of the royal council (from 1419), papal nuncio in Castile (in the same year) and collector of all papal revenues in the dioceses of Toledo, Seville,

1. R.P. Luciano Serrano, Los Conversos D. Pablo de Santa Maria y D. Alfonso de Cartagena (Madrid, 1942), p.33.

2. Ibid., p.44

3. Ibid., p.104.

Palencia, Badajoz, Cadiz, Cordoba, Jaen, Cartagena, Cuenca, Sigüenza, Segovia and Coria.¹ In 1421 he was sent to Portugal on a special embassy charged with obtaining a prolongation of the peace treaty signed by the two countries. In 1423 he returned to Castile, having successfully completed his mission by obtaining a twenty-nine-years' extension of the treaty.²

Between 1434 and 1439 he was once again absent from Castile on official business, this time as a member of the Castilian embassy to the Council of Basel.³

Pablo's other sons also achieved considerable distinction in church and local government and their careers are perhaps more representative of the social phenomenon occurring at the same time all over Castile and Aragon than the more showy performance of Pablo and Alfonso. Alfonso's brother Pedro de Cartagena was a longtime regidor of Burgos and a member of the royal guard. On 20 September 1440 Juan II gave him the title of hidalgo and authorized him to establish a mayorazgo to include all of his property, made up of his house in Burgos, the manor house and its attached property and servants that he owned in Almillos, another manor in Vellucto, and the villages of San Pedro, San Martin de Humada and Astarianos, along with his holdings in Cavia, Pililla, Quintanilla de Muno, Arroyo, Mazuela and Olmillos.⁴ The setting up of this

1. R.P. Luciano Serrano, Los Conversos D. Pablo de Santa Maria y D. Alfonso de Cartagena (Madrid, 1942), p.124.

2. Ibid., p.127.

3. Ibid., p.133.

4. Ibid., p.164.

mayorazgo shows just how far converso families had gone, during the first decades of the fifteenth century, in the direction of solidifying and developing their social and economic positions. Moving from their basic occupations as tax-collectors, mayordomos, doctors, and artisans, they were now branching out into land ownership and municipal office-holding, and transmitting extensive property to their sons. By the mid-fifteenth century they had formed an upper-middle class that was already beginning to marry into, and fuse with, the Old Christian nobility. Pablo de Santa Maria's only daughter married a covarrubios of an old noble family in the province of Burgos, while the "Instruccion del Relator para el obispo de Cuenca, a favor de la nacion Hebrea" written in 1449 by another famous converso, the Relator of Castile Fernan Diaz de Toledo, claimed that converso blood was already intermingled with the noblest families in Castile.

According to the Relator, Pablo's own family was partially responsible for this intermingling. Owing to his great personal distinction and political importance, his later descendants were able to marry into Old Christian families, such as the Manriques, Mendozas, Mirandas and Osorios. And, if more proof of the fusion of the converso with the highest Old Christian nobility were needed:

It is not necessary to tell of the sons and grandsons and great grandsons of that noble knight, and great authority D. Alonso Enríquez, the Admiral who from one side is descended from King Alonso and King Henry and on the other comes from this lineage (the conversos): and, on the side of their fathers and mothers they come from the Mendoza and Ayala and Guzmanes, and of the nobles of Toledo, and Cordoba, and thus all the families of

Castile are, thanks be to God, mixed with them. 1

The conversos could even claim to be related to the royal family:

Because there are already Kings of this lineage and Princes and sons of Kings and Princes and grandsons of Kings and Counts, Viscounts, Countesses, Marquises and other great Lords and Ladies who are descendants of the Kings of Castile, Aragon, Portugal and Navarre ... because the sons of the King of Navarre are grandsons of Admiral D. Alonso Enríquez, the old, the son of Prince Henry. In the same way are the sons of D. Henry who are of royal blood from both sides, and from their father's side are grandsons of the Master and Prince D. Fadrique son of King D. Alonso brother of King Henry the old and of Juan Alfonso Count of Niebla. 2

However one aspect of this social movement that was to be far more consequential for the Jewish communities than the very considerable degree of fusion between conversos and the Castilian upper nobility was growing converso domination of municipal governments by the mid-fifteenth century. The Relator himself mentions this in passing when he says that "today there are many of the lineage (conversos) who are regidores of Seville". The phenomenon was hardly confined only to one city. In 1413 the presence of a converso as corregidor and merino of Orense can be proven.³ While in the mid-fifteenth century a contemporary satirical work entitled "Carta de privilegio que el rey don Juan II dio a un hijodalgo" took its cue from an actual letter of Juan II enabling conversos to aspire to all honourable offices "as if they had been born Christians", in order to accuse the conversos of using dishonest methods

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1. Albert A. Sicoff, Les controverses des statutes de purete de sang en Espagne du XV au XVII siecle (Paris, 1960), p.39.
 2. Ibid., p.40.
 3. Francisco Marquez Villanueva, "Conversos y cargos concejiles en el siglo XV", Revista de Archivos Museos y Bibliotecas, LXIII (1957), 505.

in order to rise in local government:

And, for the present, we order that all marranos be received in your councils, juntas ayuntamientos and confederations and that they work with all art, subtlety and flattery in order to gain the royal offices of alcalde, regidor, jurado and escribano publico so that by virtue of the above offices they can enjoy the property and rents of the city, town, village or place where they were provided with the said office - deceiving the Old Christians with subtle words and causing them to kill one another. 1

The resentment of the Old Christians for the rise of conversos in municipal government exploded into violence, when, in 1449, Juan II's favourite, Alonso de Luna, ordered Toledo to subscribe to a forced loan of 1,000,000 maravedis to be used to defend the Castilian border with Aragon. Collection of the loan was put into the hands of a wealthy converso merchant and tax-farmer named Alonso Cota who, after obtaining most of the money from the wealthier members of the community, caused the rest to be paid by the poorest at the rate of 2 doblas per head.² This caused rioting by the lower classes who, led by one of their number, a wine-skin maker, sacked and burned Cota's residence and killed the regidor Arias de Silva, as well as other persons trying to restore order.

What began as a simple protest against unfair taxation took on political overtones with the entry of Pero Sarmiento on the side of the rioters. Sarmiento, who was the alcalde of the municipal fortification, and royal asistant of Toledo, took advantage of the prevailing anarchy to move against the conversos who dominated municipal government.

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1. Francisco Marquez Villanueva, "Conversos y cargos concejiles en el siglo XV", Revista de Archivos Museos y Bibliotecas, LXIII (1957), p.506.
 2. Ruano, op. cit., p.35.

He accused them of having:

Destroyed many noblewomen, knights and hidalgos and enjoying all the most ancient houses and manors of the Christians of the city. 1

But their worst crime was tyranny during the period in which they had held the public offices, regimientos and government of Toledo. Because of this they were disabled from holding municipal posts in the famous

Sentencia-Estatuto:

The conversos are unable, incapable and unworthy of holding all offices and public or private livings in the said city of Toledo and in its jurisdiction. 2

And some 15 regidores, escribanos and alcaldes were deposed, including a number of relatives of Alfonso de Cota himself, while many of the other conversos were forced to leave the city after Saramiento despoiled them of their property. At almost the same time a rising of the conversos of Ciudad Real, led by Juan Gonzalez, a tax-collector later burned by the Inquisition, was defeated and almost the entire Barrio Nuevo, a part of the city inhabited mainly by converts, was destroyed by an angry mob.³

Saramiento's bloody reign over Toledo was finally ended when Prince Henry, to whom the city had been given in exchange for guarantees, executed ten of his principal supporters for plotting to turn the city over to his father Juan II. The deaths of bachiller Juan Alonso and Pero Lopez de Galvez, who were canons of the cathedral and had been

1. Ríos IV, op. cit., p.122.

2. Ruano, op. cit., p.48.

3. Ibid., p.50.

Sarmiento's chief supporters in its council and, above all of the bachiller Marcos Garcia de Mora, author of the Sentencia and intellectual leader of the revolt, left Sarmiento in an extremely precarious position. On 17 December 1449 he agreed to resign his position as alcalde and leave that very night, taking all the property that he had removed from the houses of absent conversos.¹

Despite the fact that the initiative taken by Pero Sarmiento and bachiller Marcos Garcia de Mora in closing entry into a corporate body to conversos was to bear fruit much later in Statutes, like those passed by the universities of Salamanca, Valladolid and Toledo in 1622 and the Statute of Limpieza instituted in Toledo cathedral by Juan Martinez Siliceo (Archbishop of Toledo in the mid-sixteenth century), the dominant position of conversos on city councils was continued, and increased after Sarmiento's defeat. Not only were most of the conversos who had received municipal appointments in the mid-fifteenth century able to pass these on to their children,² but the coming of Ferdinand and Isabella proved to be to their advantage. In 1477, the Queen herself ordered the restoration of all converso regidores deposed by the Statute of exclusion that had been passed in Ciudad Real,³ while many of her most important supporters, like Andres de Cabrera, were conversos and were able to receive and pass on municipal appointments.⁴

1. Ruano, op. cit., p.58.

2. Villanueva, op. cit., p.48. The Relator himself was enabled to pass his post of jurado of Guadalajara on to his son Pedro Diaz de Toledo.

3. Ibid., p.515.

4. Ibid., p.507. Cabrera was corregidor of Segovia, a post he was later to pass to his brother Alonso.

Even the establishment of the Inquisitor had little effect on the situation. Although converso regidores, jurados and escribanos were continually being cited and condemned and their property confiscated, the widespread resistance to the Inquisitor on the part of city councils all over Castile and Aragon showed the continued strength of converso influence.

Although by 17 October 1483 Torquemada's powers as Inquisitor had been extended to cover Aragon the Inquisitors themselves found it very difficult to begin their work. In Zaragoza, where they had almost reached the point of preaching the "Sermon de la Fe" which served to open all Inquisitorial proceedings, rioting and the determined opposition of the cabildo forced them to leave. The same hostility was encountered in Valencia, while Barcelona expelled them almost as soon as they arrived.¹

The Inquisitors then changed their tactics by attempting to establish themselves in Teruel, a city of less importance, and consequently less power of resistance. Once the news of the possible arrival of the Inquisitor was made known to the cabildo it went into immediate special session (21 May 1484) in order to consider the ways in which it could resist.² Although the session was kept secret, a pattern of resistance was evolved there that was to drive the city into open rebellion against the Crown.

The cabildo's reaction to the Inquisitors presentation of their

1. Antonio C.F. Gumbreno, "El tribunal del Santo Oficio en Aragon; establecimiento de la Inquisition en Teruel". Boletin de la Real Academia de la Historia, LXXXVI (1925), p.549.

2. Ibid., p.550.

power on 25 May 1484 was embodied in the so-called Excepciones de Jure which brought forward all conceivable objections not to the Inquisition itself but to the Inquisitors and the nature of the powers they had presented; it was alleged not only that the chief Inquisitor Fray Juan de Solivera was too young to exercise his charge legally,¹ but that the letter from Torquemada allocating him his authority lacked certain essential features and was thereby invalid.² The city even sent so far as to assert that "this province is not in the Kingdom of Aragon" and that therefore Torquemada's delegation of authority was invalid because it only covered Aragon.³

Finally, complaining about the scandals caused by the arrival of the Inquisitors (although hardly their fault), the cabildo absolutely refused to recognize their powers and ordered their procurador fiscal Mosen Juan de Alaves, to remove himself from their obedience as the:

said Juan de Solivera is not an inquisitor nor has more power than a private person. 4

After the issue of Excepciones de Jure and a decree which absolutely prohibited citizens to have any contact with them, the Inquisitors were left isolated and impotent in the Monastery of the Merced.

Meanwhile a rumour to the effect that converso Pedro Besanto's sister was secretly buried in the "fosar de los judios" instead of the Christian

1. Antonio C.F. Cumbreno, "El tribunal del Santo Oficio en Aragon; establecimiento della Inquisition en Teruel". Boletin de la Real Academia de la Historia, LXXXVI (1925), p.573.

2. Ibid., p.574.

3. Ibid., p.575.

4. Ibid., p.572.

cemetery brought quick action from the cabildo. The rumour, which had begun with remarks made by Fray Francisco Peliz, commander of the monastery where the Inquisitors were staying (and possibly on their instigation) was quenched almost instantly.¹ The Inquisitors had played their last card. Unable to stir up popular reaction against the conversos and faced with an overwhelmingly converso-orientated city council, they were forced to withdraw from the Teruel on 16 June 1484.²

Teruel's resistance to the Inquisition was finally broken but not until Ferdinand had appointed an energetic soldier, Juan Garcia de Marilla, to bring military pressure to bear.³ With Marilla's seizure and imprisonment of the jurado Juan de la Mata on 27 January 1485, pressure was brought to bear on the cabildo itself, which finally caused it to accept the re-entry of the Inquisitors as the lesser of two evils, some two months later.⁴

The same sympathy with which the cabildo of Teruel had listened to the complaints of Pedro Besant about the rumour concerning his sister, characterised relations between the cabildo of Jerez de la Frontera and local converts during the early years of the Inquisition in that city. The cabildo, one of whose members, the Jurado Pedro de Carmona, had already been executed by the Inquisition, sought to help the conversos by

1. Antonio C.F. Cumbreno, "El tribunal del Santo Oficio en Aragon; establecimiento de la Inquisition en Teruel". Boletin de la Real Academia de la Historia, LXXXVI (1925), p.581.

2. Ibid., p.584.

3. Ibid., p.595.

4. Ibid., p.604.

intervening with the Crown in their favour and preventing the confiscation of their property in the city, even though it was legally forfeit.

Whenever it could oblige the conversos' urgent requests to make representations on their behalf, the cabildo did so. Thus, on petition of the conversos "remaining in the city", the cabildo agreed to send Francisco de Sales to court in order to intervene in their favour:

They ordered that since sending to plead for the said conversos who remain in the city is something just and in the service of God and their Highnesses that I send the said Francisco de Sales as their messenger to make this supplication. 1

Sales was successful in obtaining the favourable intervention of the converso "Prior of Prado" Francisco de Talavera, who told him that the petition:

Had come at a good time and the case (of the conversos) had been helped by what the city had written and even the entire reign would benefit and that this was his reply. 2

The Queen herself promised to write to the Inquisitors on behalf of the Jerez conversos. Somewhat later we find the cabildo intervening again, this time in favour of those conversos who had fled the city.

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 7 February 1483, f.35:

Mandarón que pues lo que piden es cosa justa e servycio de dios e de sus altezas e bien desta dicha cibdad, embio a suplicar por los dichos conversos estantes el dicho francisco de sales su mesajero.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 26 April 1483, f.64:

Veno a buen tiempo e aprovecho el case mucho lo que esta cibdad escrivyo de que aprovecho esta cibdad e aun todo el reyno e que esta fue su respuesta.

A municipal representative was ordered sent to Seville in order to demand that the Inquisitor permit fled conversos to return to the city without fear of being maltreated because:

The reverend fathers Inquisitors gave their letter and order that we do not consent to any mistreatment of the absentees that return to this city. This is what is suitable to the service of God, their highnesses and the good of the city in order that they remain in the faith. ¹

Individual conversos, especially if they held municipal posts or were related to those who did, could always count on the sympathy and help of the cabildo. On 4 April 1483 Gomez Patino, a regidor, was able to enlist the aid of the other regidores in the case of his nephew Pedro de Vargas, who was in trouble with the Inquisition because of his relation the jurado Juan de Carmona. ² Carmona, who had been deposed of his charge of jurado of San Mateo, because he was a fled converso, was replaced by Francisco de Sales on 23 January 1483. ³

Evidently, Pedro de Vargas was not the only person affected by the Inquisition's blanket prohibition on office-holding by relatives of excommunicated conversos. On 31 January the city agreed to make representations to the Inquisition in favour of its alcalde Juan de Perea,

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1483, f.68:

Los reverendos padres ynquysadores dieron su carta e mandimiento que a los absentados que vengan a esta cibdad non consyntamos que sea maltratados en ningunt manera por que esto es lo que convynieron al servycio de dios e de su alteza e al bien desta cibdad para que ellos queden en nuestra Santa Fe.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 4 April 1483, f.99v.

3. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 23 January 1483, f.24.

who requested that he and others be absolved of the disability.¹

Furthermore, despite the prohibition, Jerez showed no embarrassment about making fresh appointments from the ranks of the Carmonas themselves. The Actas reveal one Rodrigo de Carmona as an escribano publico taking testimony in a case involving Sancho Cantero and his brother Christobel.² On 7 April 1490 Juan de Carmona's own son Manuel came to the cabildo on his official business as a tax-farmer.

There came to the cabildo Manuel de Carmona, the son of the Jurado Juan de Carmona, tax farmer of the imposition of two maravedis per burden and 10 maravedis per cartload that is to be paid to the Hermanidad this year.³

Two years later, on 2 August 1491, Gonzalez de Carmona was allowed to become a cambista by special order of the Jerez cabildo despite a royal prohibition against conversos holding this office.⁴

Pedro Riquel was another converso official who could count on the aid of the cabildo during his troubles with the Inquisition. This time the request was for funds that would aid the mayordomo and other conversos in their efforts to get favourable treatment from the Crown:

And then the members discussed certain sums that Pedro Riquel, mayordomo of the city, needed for their highnesses and for

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 31 January 1483, f.28.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 7 April 1490, f.173.

3. Ibid:

Veno al dicho cabildo Manuel de Carmona, fijo del jurado Juan de Carmona arrendador de la renta de la ynpusycion de dos maravedis por cargo e dies maravedis por carretada que se paga e la dicha hermandad este ano.

4. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 2 August 1492, f.84.

other gentlemen and religious persons of this city because of the Inquisition, so that their highnesses might use him and his brother with mercy as much in the case of the property that has been condemned as in their wearing of the habit (a reference, no doubt, to avoiding wearing the San Benito) because although his father had fallen into the misdemeanour, his mother was a Christian. 1

There was unanimous agreement among the regidores that Riquel and his associates should be helped and therefore it was ordered that all necessary documents be given to him. 2

The cabildo also served as a focal point for obstructing the Crown in its attempt to collect the forfeit property of absent or condemned New Christians. Although it is very difficult to adduce direct evidence that in their actions the regidores were helping the conversos or their families directly, given the proven sympathy of the cabildo for them and the conversos in the ranks of the regidore and jurados themselves, it is highly probable.

For the investigatory powers conferred on Luis de Mesa, who was royal councillor and judge of confiscated property for the bishoprics of Seville and Cadiz on 6 May 1484 the Queen complained that:

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1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 29 September 1492, f.207:

E luego los dichos senores platicaron cerca de ciertos maravedis que Pedro Riquel, mayordomo del concejo desta cibdad, avya menester asy para sus altezas como para otros cavalleros e personas religiosas en razon de la ynquisicion para que sus altezas usasen con el e con sus hermanos del bien e merced asy de los bienes que les heren condepnados por perdidos como les abitar sus personas por que puesto que su padre avya caydo en el delito que su madre era cristiana.

2. Ibid.

Some persons without fear of God or of my justice have taken, and have and are hiding much goods, jewels, cattle and other property belonging to persons who, because of their crime, ought to lose the said property; and they have taken, transported and appropriated it, and allowed others to appropriate it without my licence. 1

Because of the loss to the treasury Mesa was authorized to make a province-wide investigation into the property thus hidden.

Difficulties now began to multiply and it was widely alleged that Mesa did not really have sufficient powers to make this investigation. Hence, another enabling letter had to be issued to him confirming his authority on 29 August 1483 and yet another on 16 May 1484.²

Armed with this confirmation of his powers, Mesa proceeded to appoint a series of investigators to take charge of collecting the forfeit property. But the same lack of co-operation that had caused Mesa to seek several confirmations of his own powers was now brought into play against his agents. Anton Martinez de Aguilera, who had the thankless task of superintending the collection of confiscated property in Jerez in 1484, found himself in difficulties almost from the start of his mission. On 13 March 1484, little more than a month after he had presented his powers to the cabildo, complaints were already being presented there. By 2 July Alonso Melgarejo, one of the jurados, was

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1484, f.70:

Algunas personas syn temor de dios e de my justicia con grand osadia han tomado e tomaron e tiene muchos bienes muebles e joyas e ganados e otros bienes rayses de las personas que para el dicho delito devieron perder los dichos bienes e los han tomado e transportado e apropiado, e dando lugar a otros que los apropia syn my licencia.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, f.72.

being sent to court to complain, and when he returned he brought a royal letter restricting Agulara's powers.¹

Finally, with approval from Court, Mesa tried another tactic. He ordered the escribanos of Jerez to conduct a survey of all the conversos who had fled the city since 1480, all those remaining and their property. The regidores agreed to this being done because the escribanos as municipal officials would have to turn the reports over to the cabildo, which could then prepare its own version to be sent to court. However, Mesa had taken the precaution of sending one of his own men - a royal escribano named Juan de la Baton - to accompany the Jerez escribanos as they made their investigation. After it was concluded, he was able to require them to give originals to Luis de Mesa. The cabildo was at once intensely concerned about this and two jurados were immediately sent to Seville in order to recover the originals on the pretext that they had to be sent to court. The escribanos were told that "in giving the investigations to him (Mesa) without consulting the Council they had misused their offices and given a poor account of themselves."²

Stubborn resistance to any investigation of conversos and their property by the Jerez city council (and by others in Andalusia) was probably responsible for the compromise settlement regarding property of reconciled conversos embodied in a royal commission given on 4 November 1490. Cristobal de Villanueva, the royal recabador of

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1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 9 July 1484, f.88.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 1485, ff.89v-90.

confiscated property in the bishoprics of Seville and Cadiz was advised that since:

In Seville and in some other cities and towns of its archbishopric and in other places in this kingdom there are some persons who have been reconciled to our sacred faith publicly as well as secretly after the period of grace and because of this they lost their property which was applied to our exchequer and, by virtue of a certain power that we have given to certain people during the years 1486 and 1487, and an agreement made with some of the reconciliados, if they give us a certain part of their property they can keep the remainder and all that they earn thereafter. 1

Villanueva was given authority to make this same settlement with any other persons who wanted it and, after taking inventory of their property, arrive at a fine that was commensurate with the victim's wealth.

Since the conversos against whom the investigation of 1485 was conducted were precisely those who had probably not taken their chance to be reconciled during that period of grace (if they had, then the investigation would not have been necessary) there can be no doubt that Villanueva's mission represented a compromise by the Crown on the seizure of forfeit property. The fact that his authority covered both the

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 4 November 1490, f.17:

En la cibdad de Sevilla e en algunas cibdades e villas e lugares de su arcobispado e en otras partes destos nuestros reynos, ay algunas personas ombres e mugeres que fasta aqui han seydo e son reconciliados a nuestra Santa Fe asy publicos como secretos despues de los terminos de gracia, e por ello perdieron sus bienes e fueron aplicados e confyscados a nuestra camera e fysco e que como que por nuestra mandado fue fecho cierto asyento con algunos de los dichos reconciliados e por virtud de cierto poder que dimos a ciertas personas los anos pasados de 1486, e 1487 en que dando nos cierta parte de sus fazienda que los bienes que les quedesen e los que ganasen dende en adelante las quedesen.

archbishoprics of Cadiz and Seville is an indication of the widespread support the conversos must have enjoyed among municipal councils in Andalusia where the conversos themselves were heavily entrenched.

Thus, although the early Inquisition did manage to burn some converso city councillors and despoil others, the conversos were able, in a variety of ways, to prevent wholesale destruction of their hard-won mastery of the councils and economic position. Those converso councillors untainted by the Inquisition could, and did act to protect the interests of their less fortunate fellows who were either subject to disabilities on office-holding (like the Carmona) or possible confiscation of their property. And, if the defence the cabildo could provide was insufficient, the conversos were adept at finding others. Lope de Torca even went so far as to obtain a papal bull absolving his father of heresy in order to procure his own reinstatement as regidor of Murcia.¹ Indeed it does not even appear likely that Ferdinand ever wished to destroy the conversos as a social class but merely to limit their freedom of action and reduce their political role.

Here was a group whose members had risen to occupy many of the highest offices of church and state, as well as permeating the middle ranks of almost every major institution. As Jews these people had been almost entirely at the service of Christian society - their skills and expertise could be purchased at small financial cost and without political obligation. As conversos they were no longer politically impotent -

1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Cartas Reales (1484-1495), 30 December 1492, ff.89v-90.

Christian society still needed their skills and knowledge, but as it had broken the original contract - by refusing them permission to live as Jews - a higher political and social price would have to be paid.

Already the Santa Maria family had been important in arranging the fall of Juan II's famous chancellor Alvaro de Luna, one of the most powerful and able men of fifteenth century Castile. In conversation with his supporters just a day before his fall, D. Alvaro clearly recognized their enmity:

You know already how this Alonso de Cartagena is of the lineage of conversos and you also know the evil this lineage wishes to me, even though I have given them greater property than any other person in this kingdom. And besides, this Alonso de Cartagena is the nephew of the Archbishop of Burgos who I know is the greatest enemy I now have. 1

Shortly thereafter D. Alvaro was arrested by a party made up of Alfonso de Santa Maria himself, aided by Ruy Dias de Mendoza, while his sides were seized by troops under the command of Alfonso's nephew, Alonso de Cartagena.²

That the great mass of converso city councillors were favourable to the rule of Ferdinand and Isabella during the war of succession is indicated by the almost universal support they enjoyed among the towns and the strong resistance of places like Zamora to the Portuguese occupation. For their part Ferdinand and Isabella filled both their chancelleries with converso functionaries. In Aragon, the Vice-Chancellor was a member of the famous Caballera family, Luis Sanchez was made

1. Ríos, op. cit., 111, p.54.

2. Ibid., p.56.

baile General while one brother, Gabriel Sanchez, became Treasurer, and the other three took the posts of cup bearer, maestro racional and Despensero mayor and lieutenant to the general treasurer, while the position of escribano racional was given to Luis de Santangal and its lieutenancy to his second cousin Mosen Luis Santangal.¹ In Castile the story of converso power was much the same. Pedro Arias de Avila was Contador Mayor, Gonzalo Franco contador de Cuentas, and Juan de Torquemada the Queen's confessor; and Hernando de Talavera, Prior of Prado, was probably the most active and respected of the Queen's councillors. In the ecclesiastical establishment Juan de Maluenda, nephew of the Santa Maria, was bishop of Coria, Alfonso de Valladolid and Alonso de Palenzuela were bishops of Valladolid and Ciudad Rodrigo, Pedro de Aranda, was bishop of Calahorra and Juan Dias Davila was bishop of Segovia.² This list could almost be extended indefinitely from Isabella's sinister mayordomo Andres de Cabrera and his wife Beatriz de Bobadilla (created Marqueses of Moya by her for their help against Henry) to her secretary Fernan Alvarez de Toledo, or Luis de Alcala, who with Rabi Mayor was arrendador of all the Crown "ordinary" rent.³

These people had to be controlled. When, as Jews, they had held high positions in royal administration that had depended absolutely on royal favour; now, as conversos, they did not need the Crown in the same way - they were independent and occupied the most powerful positions in

1. Ríos, op. cit., 111, p.240.

2. Ibid., p.241.

3. Villanueva, op. cit., p.507.

local and national government. The very fact that their support had been a major factor in the success of Ferdinand and Isabella during the war of succession was a further inducement to try to control and limit them just as had been done with the "loyalist" nobles. The Inquisition was the instrument designed for this purpose.

In its early stages, it bore little resemblance to the fearsome "state within a state" that it was to become later. Ferdinand had insisted from the first on his absolute control of appointments and dismissals and did not hesitate to make use of this power on all levels of its administration. Thus we find Ferdinand writing to the Bishop of Bonavalle on 8 August 1500 to tell him that he was going to be appointed Inquisitor of Sardinia. All his officials were to be sent to him from Spain and appointed by Ferdinand and the Inquisitors-General except for his assessor and notary.¹ On 22 April 1498 he wrote to the Inquisitor at Saragossa, ordering the reinstatement of an official they had dismissed, as he had performed well, even though his life was in danger.²

Another way in which the Inquisitor was held in check was through its lack of financial independence. Salaries and costs were paid by royal decree and Inquisitorial funds were frequently diverted to a variety of uses, ranging from the war in Granada to gifts to monasteries and other religious orders.³

1. Henry Charles Lea, A History of the Inquisition of Spain, 1 (New York, 1906-07), p.290.

2. Ibid., p.291.

3. Henry Charles Lea, A History of the Inquisition of Spain, 11 (New York, 1906-07), p.371.

The limited effect of the early Inquisition's attacks against conversos is shown more clearly, however, if we recognize the fact that the majority of persons involved in its proceedings were not burnt or given life imprisonment, but merely subjected to a loss of property. These "penitents" usually came forward voluntarily during the period of the "Edict of Grace" that usually extended for some thirty to forty days or more. An example of just how numerous these reconciliados could be is provided by the Inquisition of Toledo, which began when the tribunal of Ciudad Real moved to that city in May 1485.¹ The first auto da Fe was held on 12 February 1486 to deal only with penitents from the parishes of San Vicente, San Nicolas, San Juan de la Leche, Santa Yusta, San Miguel, San Yuste and San Corenzo. Altogether 750 persons, including some of the town's principal families, appeared in the procession of penitents. Marching bareheaded to the cathedral they were forced to listen to a sermon on their "misdeeds" and then were fined one-fifth of their property, declared unable to hold office, and required to do penance by wearing coarse clothes and marching in procession for six Fridays, flagellating themselves with hemp.²

The second auto which took in the parishes of San Roman, San Salvador, San Cristobal, San Zoil, San Andres and San Pedro was held on 2 April 1486. A total of 900 penitents appeared on this occasion and were given similar treatment. After all the parishes of the city had

1. Henry Charles Lea, A History of the Inquisition of Spain, 1 (New York, 1906-07), p.162.

2. Ibid., p.170.

been taken care of, it was the turn of the surrounding archidiaconates. Between December and March some 2,800 penitents were dealt with from the archidiaconates of Toledo, Alcaraz, Talavera, Madrid and Guadalajara.¹ Let us compare these figures to those for burnings at autos da Fe held at Guadalupe in the same year; there, the zealous Inquisitors Fray Nuno de Arevalo, Dr. Francisco de la Fuente and the Licentiate Pedro Sanchez de la Calancha held a series of autos in which one heretic and fifty two Judaizers were burnt alive along with forty eight corpses and twenty eight effigies of fugitives, while sixteen people were sentenced to life imprisonment. When we compare the total of fifty three burnt and sixteen imprisoned to the 4,550 persons reconciled in Toledo and surroundings, the punishment meted out to the conversos does not appear particularly crippling. Furthermore, as we have seen in the case of Jerez, collection of confiscated property was difficult, if not impossible, and conversos theoretically disabled from office-holding were frequently rehabilitated.

Another factor which served to lighten the effect of the Early Inquisition on the conversos' social position was the frequency with which settlements like that handled by Cristobal de Villanueva were made. These not only relieved the conversos (for a time) of worry about future fines, but frequently rehabilitated them for holding public office. In May 1487, a deal was made by a group of Cordoban New Christians who, after payment of 1,200,000 maravedís, were allowed to return to the city without the fear that the wholesale confiscation of their property to

1. Henry Charles Lea, A History of the Inquisition of Spain, 1 (New York, 1906-07), p.170.

which they were liable would be carried into effect. It was even possible for other conversos to obtain permission to retain the property of their condemned relatives and friends. In 1503 ninety three conversos of Ciudad Real and Almagro paid some 680,000 maravedís for the right to hold on to this type of property, surely a vindication of obstructionism of the Jerez type, which must have taken place in many other places and served to protect much converso property, if not its owners.¹

Among all these reconciliations the largest and most significant was that of 1495-97. This offered rehabilitation for office-holding and freedom from fines for reconciled conversos, in return for a part of their property - normally assessed at 50 maravedís per 1,000. This was another "squeeze of the lemon" rather an attempt to destroy it altogether, as it represented 5 per cent of their property rather than the 20 per cent usual for the reconciled. In Seville alone some 1,840 persons were reconciled, paying 3,024,438 maravedís, while several millions more were garnered from the district.² In all a total of 4,530 conversos were reconciled in this way in Seville and its area. Diego de Vitoria (probably a converso by his name), who was charged with collection of the agreed amounts, personally handled some 7,524,198 maravedís between 22 August 1490 and 21 November 1497, while remittances from all financial officers concerned totalled 14,692,882 maravedís.³

1. Haim Beinart, "Two Documents Concerning Confiscated Converso Property", Seferad, XVII (1957), p.305.

2. Azcona, op. cit., p.421.

3. Ibid., p.420.

Although this was a considerable sum to add to the rather depleted treasury, the reconciliation had the effect of undermining the work of the Inquisition in reducing the power of many converso families within the towns by declaring them unfit to hold public office. Far from being an attempt by the Crown to "create a new basis for co-existence for conversos who were no longer influenced by Jews"¹ as Azcona would have us believe the rehabilitation of 1495-97 was the final recognition of the Crown's failure to reduce and control converso political and economic power through the Early Inquisition. Resistance from converso dominated city councils was first able to delay the opening of the Inquisition in many areas and then to prevent, in large part, the actual collection of forfeit property which was frequently left in the hands of the condemned man's relations. The contractual rehabilitation and reconciliations of 1485-96, by allowing converso fugitives to return to cities, enabling them to hold office and fining them only a small part of their property, went a long way toward restoring the status-quo as it had existed before the Inquisition itself began. An actual reduction in the conversos' social position would have to wait for the Inquisition of the sixteenth century and, perhaps more important, the Statutes of limpiezade sangre that were to make it difficult for many conversos to enter universities, military orders and monasteries.

Along with the failure of the Crown's attempt to reduce the power of the conversos went mounting pressure against the continued existence

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.419.

of Jewish communities. That this pressure was incontestably converso inspired, that the expulsion itself was incontestably a converso idea can be seen from the decree of expulsion itself.

According to the decree (31 March 1492) the major reason for expelling the Jews was that constant intercourse between them and both old and new Christians caused the latter to waiver in their faith. Apparently the Jews were using any and all means to obtain converts. Taking Christians aside they would:

Instructing them in the beliefs and ceremonies of their law, have meetings where the practices of their law would be read out and taught to them, seeing to it that they and their sons became circumcised, giving them the books in which they recite their prayers ... persuading them to maintain the law of Moses as much as they can; making them understand that there is no other law nor truth but that one. 1

Although strong measures had been taken by the Crown to separate Jews from Christians - and the Jews of Andalusia had even been expelled as a warning to the others - the continual "conversation and communication" that the Christians still had with them was causing infinite harm to the faith.² Furthermore, despite severe punishments, the Jews continued their proselytising. In this they were guilty of "a grave and detestable crime" and like any other corporate body guilty of "perverting the good and honest life of the cities" they deserved to be expelled. This

1. Rios, op. cit., 111, p.603:

Instruyendoles en las creencias e ceremonias de su ley, haciendo ayuntamiento, donde les ensenen lo que an de tener e guardar segun su ley; procurando de circuncidar a ellos e a sus hijos, dandoles libros por donde recen sus oraciones, persuadiendoles que tengan e guarden quanto pùdieron la ley de Mosen, faciendoles entender que non hay otra ley nin verdad.

2. Rios, op. cit., 111, p.604.

measure was especially justified because no "crime is greater, more dangerous or more contagious" than the one they were committing.

Several main themes emerge from the decree which serve to mark it as the final expression of one point of view within the context of fifteenth-century arguments about the converso-Jewish problem. Firstly, intercourse with the Jews is a danger to the faith of all Christians - not just to that of the converso. The New Christian is nowhere singled out in the decree as in any way particularly threatened and I therefore cannot find any justification for Sicroff's opinion that "The edict of expulsion does not leave any doubt that they (the Jews) were expelled in order to safeguard the faith of the New Christians".¹ Secondly, the Jew is evil. At the Cortes of Toledo he was separated from the Christians in order that he could "live apart in his sin and feel remorse". Furthermore, the Jew is guilty, through his intercourse with Christians, of the most serious crimes and his presence amounts to a perversion of normal life. Because of this evil, it is necessary to prohibit in the most absolute way possible all intercourse between Christians and Jews. The most efficacious way of doing this is by their outright expulsion.

These points are a remarkable echo of the arguments presented in several important fifteenth-century works written by conversos.

The remarkable lack of distinction between Old and New Christians in the decree owes its origin to a number of books by conversos who stressed the unity of the faithful, whether Jew or Gentile, that was

1. Sicroff, op. cit., p.67.

achieved through baptism. Alonso Diez de Montalvo, for example, who at the insistence of Juan II wrote a brief condemning the Sentencia Estatutos, which had, of course, attempted to separate Old and New Christians, stresses that the traditional hostility of Gentiles and Jews was ended by "the birth of Christ and his passion".¹ He then goes on to point out that Christian law and society had long recognized the equality of Christians and Jews after baptism because converted Jews like Saint Julian had found important places in the Church.²

In what was perhaps the most important fifteenth-century work on this subject, the converso Alonso de Cartagena, son of D. Pablo de Santa Maria, also stressed the essential unity of all believers. The Defensorium Unitatis Christianae (1449) pointed out that it was perhaps more natural for a Jew to come to believe in Christianity than for a Gentile, because of the similarity between the Old and the New Testaments, and because the Jews themselves had never been pagans.³

For D. Alonso the name Israel has ceased to denote only Jews, but should be applied to all those who have accepted Christianity. The pious Christian, whether of Jewish or Gentile origin, is the true Israelite.⁴ Therefore, since all those who remain faithful are united, there can be no separation between Jews and Gentiles after baptism.⁵

1. Sicroff, op. cit., p.36.

2. Ibid., p.37.

3. Ibid., p.44.

4. Ibid., p.46.

5. Ibid., p.47.

That this unified body of Christians conceived of by converso writers (but denied by Old Christians in the Sentencia Estatuto) was threatened by Jews, was an idea first expressed by the converso Alonso de Orposa, General of the Jeronymite order, in his Lumen ad revelationem gentium. Written, with the encouragement of Archbishop Carillo, as a reply to the Franciscans' demand for action against conversos within religious orders, Orposa also stressed the unity of the faithful and in a previous letter had blamed Old Christians for assuming the right to judge the faithfulness of conversos:

The root of all these disturbances proceeds from the fact that the Old Christians accuse the baptised Jews of living evilly and disturbing others. 1

The real point of departure for Orposa, however, was the stress he laid on the Jews as the source of all the evil. He insists on the necessity of not permitting new converts to associate with Jews,² goes on to accuse them of a general and perpetual hostility to Christianity and castigates all those princes, ecclesiastics and others who have allowed them to associate with the faithful by giving them employment in their houses and estates. It is from this intercourse with Christians:

That all harm has come, with the liberty and power held by the cruel they have done great evil, even coming to corrupt the virgin daughters of the Christians almost publicly and at the same time making many Old Christians become Jews and turning many converts to error and perversion. 3

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1. Sicroff, op. cit., p.69.
 2. Ríos, 111, op. cit., p.283.
 3. Ibid.

A careful reading of Orposa's words in the light of the decree of expulsion makes them seem almost prophetic. The main points made in the Lumen ad revelationem, unity of the faithful and the evil intentions of the Jews against all Christians, are faithfully reflected in the wording of the decree.

But if converso writings accounted for the decree of expulsion ideologically, the conversos also acted on a practical level to make the expulsion a reality. Social pressure against the Jews was not caused by "a hatred that increased through the mysterious channels that stimulate mass psychology"¹ but rather a calculated, if unco-ordinated, campaign by the converso-dominated governing class of the towns. This campaign was to lead to a process of expulsion first from Andalusia in 1483, then from a number of towns and provinces, and finally to the great expulsion of May 1492. Their agitation made the Crown's traditional policy of Jewish protection impossible and forced the expulsion order.

In order to justify this argument it will first be necessary to dispose of the assumption that Ferdinand and Isabella drew up the decree of expulsion as a direct exercise of the royal will. This is the impression given by the decree itself, which says that:

We ... with the council and opinion of some prelates and grandees and knights of our Kingdom and other persons of wisdom from our Council having had much deliberation over it, have agreed to order all the said Jews to leave. 2

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1. Luis Suarez Fernandez, Documentos acerca de la expulsion de los judios (Valladolid, 1964), p.39.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Patronato Real, 28, 6, in Suarez Fernandez "Documentos", p.393:

Por ende nos, con consejo e parecer de algunos perlados e grandes e cavalleros de nuestros reynos e de otras personas de ciencia de nuestro consejo, abiendo abido sobre ello mucha deliberacion, acordamos de mandar salir todos los dichos judios de nuestros reynos.

Modern writers, such as Marijal or Azcona, have gone even further. For them the expulsion was not only a supreme exercise of the royal will but an absolute necessity for the building up of royal supremacy within the State. Azcona assures us that:

Today no one can be deceived ... the expulsion was dictated by a supreme consideration of state: the sovereignty of the Crown did not suffer the existence of an unassimilated social group. 1

Yet, as we have seen, the historic relationship between the Crown and Jewish communities had given the Crown almost absolute control over the Jews' lives and property. Even their privileges could be taken away by royal decree; all this with the full recognition of these royal prerogatives by the Jews themselves. If the Crown could exercise absolute sovereignty over any group in fifteenth-century Spanish society it was the Jews, and their religious non-conformity was precisely the thing that allowed it.

The most direct proof of the Crown intentions to keep the Jews can be found in the financial documents of the 1490's. There many references can be found that testify to the essentially unplanned, hurried nature of the expulsion. Why, if the expulsion was a long planned move, was the contract for tax-farming the "servicio y medio servicio" of the Jews let out to Alfonso and Diego de Avila in 1490 to run for four years instead of two? Why again was this contract renewed for 1492 on 16 December 1491? Rabi Mayer who, as has been mentioned, farmed most of the Crown's ordinary rents, was also given new contracts running

1. Azcona, op. cit., p.642.

through the expulsion date. On 10 January 1492 he took a contract on the rents of the city of Almeria that was scheduled to run for the entire year. He was also successful in his bid to farm the diesmo de azyete of Seville from 21 December 1491 through 21 December 1494.¹ Perhaps the Crown's fear of a major financial dislocation accounted for the hurried baptism, under pressure of Rabi Mayer.

A clear picture of the confusion and financial loss caused by a sudden, unplanned departure emerges when a document entitled: "traslado del carta de pago Luys de Alcala e Fernan Nunes Coronel de los descuentos de los Judios" is considered. This is an order to pay Fernan Nũnes Coronel (Rabi Mayer) and Luis de Alcala some 6,000,000 maravedis as compensation for their losses and the losses of their assistants as a consequence of the financial dislocation caused by the expulsion:

Because of the exile of the Jews that was ordered by their Highnesses there were many bankruptcies in their districts; in some because their tax-collectors were Jewish and did not put them (the districts) in the hands of Christian tax-collectors; and in others because there was Jewish merchandise and business which ceased because of the exile thus bankrupting the rents; and in other places where there were no Jews there was commerce with them because they came from other places with merchandise. Their business also ceased, and bankruptcies occurred in the rents. 2

1. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, 51 "Antiguo".

2. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, 54 "Antiguo":

Por cabsa e razon del destierro que sus altezas mandaron fazer de los judios ovo muchos quebrs en los partidos dellos, algunos por que eran los recabdadores dellos judios e que como que ellos fueron por el dicho destierro non se sanearon los tales partidos en poder de los recabdadores xristanos, e en otros por que la yda dellos cesaron los tales tratos e las dichas rentas recibieron quebra, e en otros partidos donde no avia judios avia trato dellos por que venia con mercaderias de otros partes a los tales a los tales logares los quales tratos cesaron e ovo quebra en las dichas rentas.

The 6,000,000 maravedís that had to be paid out by the Crown on this occasion can only represent a small part of the actual loss suffered by local tax-farmers because of the sudden departure of the Jews. Furthermore the Crown was also responsible for paying compensation to persons who had purchased mercedes on Jewish rents for the year 1493. A partial list of these includes the Countess of Benavente, who held 4,000 maravedís on the tax of meat and wine of the Jews of Murcia for 1493, the Monastery of Santa Yuste of Alcala de Henares with its 8,000 maravedís 11,000 maravedís held by various citizens of Segovia for 1493, 17,000 maravedís held by citizens of Trugillo and 13,000 maravedís by those of Zamora.¹ It must again be emphasized that this list of disappointed merced holders could be vastly expanded if the financial documents for the period were less fragmentary.

Thus the financial dislocation caused by the expulsion would seem to testify to its hurried, essentially unplanned nature, so out of character for the normally meticulous Ferdinand and Isabella. Rather than being something actually desired by the monarchs it was done in response to pressure coming from their most important supporters - the urban governing class, with its heavy converso membership and strong converso sympathies.

Pressure was exerted in several ways, all of which tended to make the position of the Jews intolerable and their expulsion from the

1. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, 55 "Antiguo":

Lo que se averiguo de los descuentos e quebradas e otros cosas que Hernan Nunes Coronel e Luys Alcala pide al Rey e la Reyna.

community inevitable. Broadly speaking, however, all the measures can be put into two categories: those connected with "Ghettoization" of the Jews, that is to say isolating them from contact with the Christian community, both physically and in other ways; and the removal of their exemptions from payment of war servicios, local taxes and Hermidad contributions, as well as their other exemptions. As they were already paying their own ordinary and special taxes to the Crown, removal of these exemptions would have the effect of bringing them under "double taxation", causing them to sell their property in order to raise ready cash. "Ghettoization" and "double taxation" both tended toward expulsion simply because Jewish commerce could not survive if the Jews were physically isolated from the local community - without a flourishing commercial life most Jews could barely hope to pay the special war taxes imposed upon them by the Crown, much less those reserved for Christians. Gradually, the position they had held for hundreds of years was destroyed - the physical removal from Christian society through ghettoization and the destruction of their property through double taxation, swiftly had the effect of disarticulating them from Castilian society. They were not disfunctional but simply non-functional and their total expulsion could not be long delayed.

Although the law which provided for the complete segregation of Jews from the Christian community was actually passed at the Cortes of Toledo, the Crown, on this occasion, was merely ratifying and extending a movement which can be traced back at least as far as 1477; on 28 December 1477 a royal order was sent to Soria which authorized the

segregation of its Jews for the same "religious" reasons - i.e. the danger of Jewish converse with Christians that was later embodied in the decree of expulsion. Needless to say, just as in the latter document, the order of 28 December accurately reflects converso ideas about this problem.

In order to evade the damage among Christians that follows from Jews living among them, we order that from now on the Jews cannot live among Christians. 1

The Jews had been subject to segregation orders of this kind before, notably in the "ordenamientos por el encerramiento de los Judios" which was inspired by the converso Pablo de Santa Maria in 1412 and ratified in a Papal Bull of 11 May 1415,² but this had been ignored. Now, however, there were important differences. In order to make sure that the Jews did live apart, an agent of the Crown was to be sent with full powers to signal an area in which they could live and supervise the move³ and collect any fines arising from it.

All the important elements that went to make up the segregation decree of 1480 are present in the 1472 letter. Social intercourse with the Jews was dangerous for Christians, therefore they should be made to live in their own separate area of the city. A royal commissioner was to be sent who would be responsible for overseeing the change of residence. A strict prohibition on owning houses outside the new Judería was imposed

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1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 28 December 1477, in Suárez Fernández, "Documentos", p.133.
 2. Ríos, 11, op. cit., p.493.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 26 August 1478, f.30, in Suárez Fernández, "Documentos", p.134.

on the Jews who were enjoined from sleeping outside its confines even for one night.¹ However, although the Crown took seriously its task of separating the Jew's living accommodation from that of the Christian, it never meant to carry this so far that Jewish commerce would be injured and on several occasions emphasized that Jews were permitted to retain their shops and stalls in the Christian quarter.²

In the two years from April 1481 royal officers fanned out across Castile carrying out the segregation order. However, what may have started as an overzealous attempt to resolve the Jewish problem in a way that would be satisfactory to all concerned, was soon carried far beyond the original desires of the monarchs until it came to threaten the continued existence of Jewish communities.

Naturally, since the Jews were forced to move to a specific location the owners of property there would be sure to charge as much as they could for their property. The Jews of Badajoz vainly tried to get the corregidor to intervene:

Because those persons owning or renting the said houses to them (the Jews) have been demanding twice their actual value. 3

In another case the owner of a house that the Jews wanted to destroy in order to make a new street through the aljama, "seeing their need,

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, January 1483, f.69, in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.32.
2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 2 September 1485, f.9, in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.32.
3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 15 May 1490, f.337:
Por que dos vezes mas de lo que valen las dichas casas en que byven e moran de alquilar e tributo les leven e demandan por ellos las personas cuyas son.

demanded much more than the just price."¹ Despite royal prohibition these abuses continued. On 28 February 1491 we find the Jews of Caceres complaining in tones similar to those of the Jews of Badajoz:

When we ordered the Jews to live apart the indicated area was one where there were many houses owned by Christians ... and, the Christians, seeing their need for those houses rented them for a great deal more than what they had paid for them before the said Judería was indicated. 2

In Guadalajara the Crown had to intervene in order to prevent heavy financial losses to the Jewish community after the prior of the Jeronymites ordered them to purchase houses in the designated area that were owned by Moors. Pointing out that the original intention of the law passed at the Cortes of Toledo was to separate faithful Christians from unbelievers the Crown declared the purchase of Moorish houses to be unnecessary especially considering that the Jews were already "fatigued" from the sums they had expended in acquiring property owned by Christians.³

In addition to the severe financial losses suffered by the Jews when they had to move into one specific part of the city, they frequently complained that the indicated area was inadequate. The Jews of Avila, for example, complained that the area was too narrow and that it did not permit them to exercise their "offices"⁴ but, more ominously, that "it

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1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 3 August 1490, f.65.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 28 February 1491, f.108; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.351.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 6 March 1487, f.151; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, pp.286-7.
 4. Leon Tello Pilar, Judios de Avila, (Avila, 1963), p.77.

does not have sufficient houses where they can live so that two or three families have to live in one house".¹

In Leon similar overcrowding had resulted after the original move to the new aljama. The Crown ordered its alcalde Alonso de Valderravano and two regidores to amplify the Ghetto not only to satisfy the Jews already residing there but to accommodate a further influx.²

Even as late as May 1491 the Crown was still disposed to alter the designated aljamas in the Jews' favour. On 22 May 1491 the Crown ordered Francisco Frances and the corregidor of Plasencia to adjust the size of the aljama of Cabezuela in conformity with the Jews' desires. They were not only ordered to increase its area but to include streets where the Jews could carry on their businesses more profitably.³

However, the Jews' attempts to improve their new aljamas by enlisting the help of the Crown frequently encountered serious even violent opposition from local officials. In the city of Plasencia the Crown had ordered its local juez de residencia licenciado de Segura to revise the aljama he had designated in order to satisfy Jewish complaints of overcrowding. On 8 June 1491 the Crown sent an alvala to Francisco Frances who was already in the area investigating the situation in Cabezuela, ordering him to look into the Jews' complaints of arbitrary fines and ill treatment received from Segura since the time they had

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1. Leon Tello Pilar, Judios de Avila, (Avila, 1963), p.77.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 11 April 1488, f.124; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.300.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 22 May 1491, f.96; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.367.

requested changes in the aljama. They claimed that although Segura had received a royal order telling him to satisfy their demands he had ignored it and when they sent a messenger to Court about this he had ordered his apprehension and imprisonment.¹

Once the Jews had been moved to their specially designated ghetto by royal officers they found that the pressure against them was increased. In Seville, where segregation had taken place well before 1481, the Jews had moved to the Corral de Xerez. They now feared that certain "caballeros y personas" of the city would attack them there. On this occasion, as on many subsequent ones, the Crown reacted strongly and took the Jews under royal protection:

I take and receive under my royal security the Jews of the said city of Seville. 2

The Jews were ordered to denounce those caballeros who had threatened them to the local justices, who were then to punish them in accordance with the punishments reserved for breaking of royal securities. Within five years all the Jews of Andalusia had to be formally expelled.

In other places, more subtle pressures were put upon the Jews in order to force them out of their new aljamas. In Badajoz, Rabbi David de la Linda, who had purchased several houses within the designated area, feared that local judges would order his eviction from them without his

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 8 June 1491, f.47; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, pp.370-371.

2. A.G. Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.147:
Tomo e rascibo so mi gurada y so my seguro, amparo y defendimiento real a los dichos judios de la dicha cibdad de Sevilla.

ever being called to court.¹ Once again the Crown offered its protection, this time confining itself to ordering that he at least should be granted the right to be heard before being dispossessed.

In many places local officials would force Jews already established in the new aljamas to move a second time on the grounds that the new location still posed a danger to Christians or force them to make major alterations in the aljama at their own cost. After the expenses of their first move they could ill afford to do either of these two things. In Orense the Jews had established themselves in their new aljama during 1481 and lived there in relative tranquility until 1488. In that year, local officials, "without authorization" from the Crown, ordered them to move to another place near the Fuente del Obispo and fined them 3,000 maravedís because they were unwilling to obey immediately.²

The final expulsion of the Jews of Plasencia began on 26 March 1491 when some regidores complained that the area which had been set aside for Jewish occupation left them "the best houses and streets of the city".³ In replying to this charge the Jews declared that the area that had been marked out was almost empty of people and houses and was one of the worst repaired in the city. Despite the fact that they had taken up residence there on their own request some regidores who wished to harm them were calling for an investigation into the partition on the pretext that it

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 31 August 1484, f.10.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 27 February 1489, f.182, in Suárez Fernández, pp.321-322.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 22 May 1491 (N.F.).

was harming the city.

The heavy cost of setting up new aljamas and meeting the burden of war taxation could only be borne if the Jews could hope to continue their trades and occupations in peace and without excessive restriction. Unfortunately the harassment to which the new aljamas were subject coincided with personal disabilities placed on the circulation and dealings of Jews outside of them that were gravely damaging to Jewish commerce. These disabilities were of two kinds: prohibitions on Jews conducting business in the Christian part of the town and ordinances passed by important commercial centres that prohibited Jews from residing in them long enough to carry on their business dealings. On 9 September 1485 the Burgos cabildo ordered that the following ordinances must be strictly observed:

1. Jews must not enter the houses of Christians except to take work away with them.
2. On Sundays Jews could only work within the aljama whose gates must be closed.
3. Jews cannot enter the houses of Christians to buy or sell used clothing or any other kind of merchandise. ¹

The Crown's failure to maintain the Jews in possession of their new aljamas in towns under its jurisdiction was not unique, nobles had similar problems and similar failures in towns under their control. Local officials kept up a steady harassment of the Jews causing them to expend their money in legal fees and the purchase of new property in order to satisfy the requirements of successive mediators. In Burguillos, a town owned by the Duchess of Plasencia, the corregidor, Guitierre Bravo, was

1. A.M. Burgos, 9 September 1485, ff.32-32v.

responsible for designating the new aljama. The first complaint by the town after it had been set up concerned its proximity to the city gates. The Duchess attempted to resolve this difficulty by sending one of her servants to investigate. The official, Gutierre de Trexo provided for changes in the area of the aljama that would have the effect of removing from it the streets closest to the gates and adding another street whose houses the Jews were made to purchase. After the Jews had complied with this sentence the town again complained about the aljama and demanded that the matter be reviewed. The Duke complied with the town's request and sent Alonso Nieto as his representative. Nieto confirmed the Jews in possession of the entire aljama except for the street awarded to them by Trexo. Once again the Jews were faced with a heavy financial loss as they could not find purchasers for the houses on that street. However, in order to avoid further litigation they accepted their reduced aljama and provided money to enclose it.

After the death of the Duke of Placencia the town came under the control of the Master of Alcantara. The cabildo took this opportunity to re-open the case and succeeded in getting the Master to assign Pero Cordones del Arco to look into the whole matter again. Although del Arco confirmed the provisions made by Pero Nieto the aljama still feared "That the said city was not content with this and that it would continue to bother them about it endlessly". ^{XX} The aljama thus requested that the crown confirm the sentence handed down by Pero Cordoves del Arco in the hope that the city could be prevented from continuing its harassment.¹

1. A.G.Simancas,() September 1489,f.171, in Suarez Fernandez,pp.331-3.

In Trujillo the attack on Jewish commerce assumed a different form. Instead of regulating what Jews could do when they left the aljama the cabildo passed an ordinance that reduced the time they were allowed to leave it. Previously, they could carry on their businesses and circulate freely until 9.30 at night. However, according to a complaint recorded in an albala of 29 October 1490, the cabildo had passed an ordinance restricting them to their own precincts from dusk until the next morning.¹

The Crown's impotence in the face of massive opposition by regidores and other town officials was now made clearly evident. Although the Crown had ordered that the corregidor should inquire into the town's complaints and see if they could be dealt with without expelling the Jews, he was powerless to prevent the occupation of their houses and the synagogue:

And now, it is related to us on behalf of the aljama that despite our letter some of you are trying to take their houses and synagogue. 2

Even in cases where the Crown itself had intervened to allow specific aljamas to carry on their businesses in the chief plaza of a city pressure was continually exerted against them. In Soria the monarchs had authorized them to have stores and exercise all their trades and occupations without fear of fines from the city in a letter sent to the cabildo on 2 September 1485. However, on 25 January 1488 the Crown had

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 29 October 1490, f.248; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, pp.347-8.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 22 May 1491:
E agora por parte de la aljama de los judios nos fue fecha relacion diziendo que no embargante la dicha nuestra carta algunos de vos tenteyas de les tomar su synagoga e les ocupan sus casas.

to confirm its order as the Jews had complained that the cabildo was violating their privileges "in order to please certain persons of the said city".¹

The cabildo was not the only corporate body within the town that passed ordinances damaging to Jewish artisans and traders. In Vitoria the tailors' guild (a body which must have had a heavy converso membership) ordered that Jewish tailors could not accept business outside the city and that any member of the guild was allowed to punish a Jew caught violating this ordinance. Even though the Jews remonstrated successfully against this ordinance before the city council which ordered it to be suspended the guild continued to enforce it. Despite its illegality and the prejudice to Jewish commerce caused by it the Crown felt itself too weak to order the ordinance removed and instead declared that the guild itself should send its representatives to court.²

A development that was just as damaging to Jewish commerce nationally and regionally as the local ordinances were to their trade within the towns was the growth of prohibitory ordinances in important commercial centres. The Jewish merchants of Medina del Pumar in the province of Guipuscoa in order to purchase cloth which they would then offer for sale in the fairs at Medina del Campo. Bilbao had always been one of the most important centres for these purchases because of its importance in the wool trade but in 1490 local authorities had passed an ordinance

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1. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 25 January 1488, f.292; in Suárez Fernández, pp.291-293.
 2. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 30 July 1488, f.317; in Suárez Fernández, pp.305-307.

prohibiting Jews from sleeping in the city under penalty of 2,000 maravedís and stating that no one within the city could receive a Jew as his guest. The Jewish merchants were left with the choice of not coming to trade in Bilbao or staying in guest houses located on the outskirts of the city all of which were both poor and dangerous. Once again, despite the fact that the ordinance had been passed without royal permission, the Crown was powerless to order it suspended.¹

Attempts to impose municipal taxes on the Jews, who were exempt from them, did not originate with the war years (1480-92). On 19 June 1475 we find the Crown intervening to prevent the aljama of Alfaro from being included in the tax roll that was being made up for a servicio that was probably being used for the war against the Portuguese.² Somewhat later that same month the Crown acted to stop demands by the alcaldes of Avilas municipal fortress that the Jews pay a maintenance tax that had been ordered suppressed. It was decreed that since the tax no longer applied anywhere in Castile it should not be demanded of the Jews.³

Despite Crown intervention, pressure on Jewish exemptions from local taxes increased throughout the 1480's. In November 1480 the Jews of Valderas complained that their traditional exemptions from alcavalas, moneda, pedidos and the servicio and medio servicio were being violated.

1. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 12 August 1490, f.253; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, pp.339-40.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 19 June 1475, f.513; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.87.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 27 June 1475, f.511; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, pp.89-91.

They alleged that they had enjoyed these exemptions since time immemorial but that "just recently" the local tax collectors had been demanding these taxes from them.¹

Just as they did in the case of the boundaries of the aljama city councils would make agreements with the Jews as to the amount they would have to pay in local taxes only to break them later. In Vitoria, the cabildo and aljama had carried on litigation before the Bachelor de Alava who had been sent from court. Alava gave his judgement which was accepted by both parties but on 30 July 1488 the Jews complained that the city was violating the agreement.²

As late as February 1486 the Crown was still disposed to maintain Jewish exemptions in their full rigour and to expand them to cover all new types of taxation brought on by the war. In a general prohibition it ordered:

Do not make any tax or imposition on the Jews either for the war or for foot soldiers or animals or anything else by way of the Hernandad or in any other manner.³

Heavy pressure was being exerted on the Jews and the Crown ordered that if any such taxes had been already levied on them they were to be declared null and void.

However, the Crown's ability to protect the Jews dwindled rapidly.

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1. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 13 November 1480, f.39; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, pp.192-3.
 2. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 30 July 1488, f.318; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, pp.307-8.
 3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 23 February 1486, f.160; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, pp.275-6.

By 1487, it was forced to concede that the Jews were subject to Hermidad payments after demands were made by municipal procuradores at the Junta of Fuente de Sabaco that they be forced to pay. Now, despite the fact that the Jews had been paying a special war tax called the castellanos del oro since 1482, they would have to contribute equally with Christians (who were not subject to the castellanos) in all Hermidad payments. Since, as has already been pointed out, the special Hermidad subsidies were the principal means of paying for the war, removal of the Jews' exemptions here was a severe blow, especially since they were still forced to pay the castellanos del oro.¹

By the 1490's Jewish payment of the Hermidad subsidy was accepted in most places and the Crown now attempted, in vain, to limit the extent of Jewish tax liability to the Hermidad and nothing else. On 24 March 1491 a letter was addressed to the city of Badajoz ordering that a recent war repartimiento that included the city's Jews be rescinded and that they not be held liable for any war payments other than the Hermidad as they were already paying the castellanos del oro.²

However, once the Crown had accepted the forced payment of the Hermidad by Jews it was concerned to make sure that they paid in full. Therefore, although double taxation was causing a gradual depopulation of the Cacares ghetto leaving only a few poor families to pay the entire Jewish contribution the Crown ordered the sum to be collected. Jews

1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Cartas Reales, 1475-1488, ff.194-196.

2. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 24 March 1491, f.356; in Suárez Fernández, p.358.

owning property in the city should be forced to pay the contribution even if the property had to be sold.¹

In Murcia, where there is evidence that the Crown still attempted to protect Jews from at least some Hernandad subsidies, the regidores were not above threatening not to collect the Christians' contribution unless the Jews paid as well. In 1491, when this occurred, the cabildo ordered the valuation of Jewish property for tax purposes without even considering the royal privilege that had been presented by the Jews. In all, the aljamas of Murcia, Puebla, Alcontarilla, Fontana and Zamora were ordered to pay 25,263 maravedís.

Immediately afterward a messenger was sent to Court to demand that all Jewish tax exemptions be revoked.²

That this demand was accepted is shown by the Jews' payment of ten per cent of a municipal servicio consisting of the salary for twenty lances and 350 foot ordered on 1 January 1492. Finally, in what appears a definite attempt to victimize the Murcian Jews, they were ordered to pay 50,000 maravedís toward war expenses on the same day as the news of the fall of Granada reached the city. Despite their protests the Jews were given three days to comply, on pain of a 50,000 maravedís fine.³ When we realize that the Murcian Jews had only paid 16,000 maravedís toward the Hernandad servicios of 1491, it becomes obvious that they

1. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 15 March 1491, f.90; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.353.

2. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 15 February 1491.

3. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 1 January 1492.

could not sustain this steeply mounting rate of taxation for very long without selling their property and leaving the city.

From the mid-1480's a series of unauthorized expulsions began to take place all over Castile. Sometimes, the expulsion was not done formally, but rather effected through the passage of discriminatory municipal ordinances that had the effect of making the continued existence of Jewish communities impossible.

These ordinances struck at the most basic necessities of the Jewish community: their ability to purchase provisions for themselves and their families and the possibility of marrying their sons and daughters in the city and so continue to live there. In Soria, where the Jews formed the garrison of the alcázar a municipal ordinance was passed in August 1484 which prohibited the sale of supplies or foodstuffs to them. Jorge de Beteta alcaide of the castle wrote to the Crown demanding its intervention because if this ordinance was allowed to take effect:

The fortress will be deserted and the Jews will live in the city or go to the kingdoms of Aragon or Navarre. 1

On 4 November 1488 and 3 June 1489 the cities of Segovia and Medina del Campo respectively passed municipal ordinances which limited the Jews access to local markets. In Segovia the Jews were prevented from purchasing fish on Fridays or any other day in which they were brought

1. A.G. Simancas, 21 August 1484, f.128; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.228:

Si lo suso dicho asy oviese de pasar seria forçado que la dicha fortelesa se despoblase e los dichos judios se abaxasen a bivar a la dicha cibdad o se fuesen a bivar al reyno d'Aragon o de Navarra.

to market.¹ The regidores of Medina del Campo passed an order which prohibited merchants coming from outside the city from stopping in the aljama to sell their products. By this ordinance the Jews were deprived of such essentials as coal, wood and baked bread.²

In Burgos the regidores passed an ordinance "without royal order" that limited the number of Jews who could live in the ghetto and prohibited them from exercising their occupations outside its walls. Furthermore, all Jews married within the last three years were forced to leave. This had the effect of forcing a mass exodus because:

All the Jews who had marriageable sons or daughters have to move out of the city if they cannot marry them there. 3

This time the Crown almost had to beg the city council to send representatives to Court so that its side of the case should be heard "because the knowledge of this pertains to us".

The partial expulsion of the Jews of Burgos was followed by the complete expulsion of those of Villacoma and Valmeseda by officials of Valmeseda. When a royal order prohibiting this expulsion was presented an alcalde, Pero Sanchez de Terreros, seized it, tore it up before it could be presented to the cabildo, and imprisoned the escribano who had brought it to the city.⁴ Needless to say, this could not have been done

1. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 4 November 1488, f.200; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.310.
2. A.G. Simancas, RGS, 3 June 1489, f.94; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, pp.326-7.
3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 1 March 1486, f.41; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.227.
4. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 21 February 1487, f.47; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.285.

without the consent of local regidores.

The Crown's only reply to this indignity practised against one of its officials was to send the Licentiate Garcia Lopez de Chinchilla to the city in order to investigate. He was ordered to be scrupulously fair and make sure to take testimony from all parties concerned in the dispute, even though Terreros' action was tantamount to rebellion.

Neither Chinchilla's investigation nor another royal prohibition issued on 4 December 1488 could prevent the total expulsion of the Jews of Valmaseda. A royal letter issued on 19 December 1488 records that:

The council and citizens of the said town of Valmaseda are trying to eject the Jews from the said city where they and their ancestors have lived for 100 years by their own authority and without asking for our licence or order. 1

Finally, seeing the uselessness of royal protection, the Jews agreed to leave Valmaseda some time in 1489. The Crown concurred in the appointment of several persons to assess the value of Jewish property in the town so that the Jews could be compensated.²

Thus the long history of Spanish Jewry was brought to a close, not by the cool, calculated, rational action of "absolute" monarchs, but through stubborn pressure by a converso dominated urban patriciate. With the addition of conversos to the Christian middle-class the Jews' role had become superfluous. Their expertise in finance, tax-collection, commerce and manufacture could now be taken over by the Christian converso

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1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 19 December 1488, f.159; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, p.313.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 30 January 1489, f.284; in Suárez Fernández, Documentos, pp.317-9.

middle class that had grown up since 1391. At best they could still serve the monarchy as a useful counterweight to the conversos but, by the last decade of the fifteenth century, opposition to them had become overwhelming. The Crown could no longer protect them, while their growing financial weakness (the castellanos had been reduced from 18,000 in 1482 to 10,000 in 1486) made them less and less of an asset. By 1488 gradual expulsions from places like Burgos and Valmeseda were probably creating a growing body of homeless. If this process continued for very long the Jews would soon be unable to make any substantial contribution to the treasury. By 1492, when war expenditure, public debt and other factors were producing the financial crisis to be described in the next chapter and the widespread refusal to obey royal orders protecting the Jews was threatening a breakdown of royal authority, it seemed expedient to order their complete expulsion.

CHAPTER VIIITHE CRISIS OF 1489-94 AND THE FIRST
COLUMBIAN EXPEDITION

To the widespread flouting of royal authority represented by the persecution and forced expulsion of the Jews was added, in the period 1489-94, a serious political and financial crisis that imperilled all the gains made by Ferdinand and Isabella in the years since the end of the Portuguese war. Among the various methods for dealing with the situation that was devised by these brilliant monarchs and their advisers, the first Columbian Expedition was the most consequential, for the future of Spain, Western Europe and the world.

Aside from their rebellion over the Jews, the most serious threat posed by the towns during 1489-92 was a growing reluctance to pay the increased costs of the war and occupation, whose most serious immediate consequence was the desertion of municipal levies from the siege camps around Baza and Granada, because their salaries had not been paid. This began as early as 27 June 1489, when Ferdinand complained to the Jerez city council that:

Some of the horse and foot of the city that are serving in the Moorish war have returned from the siege camp without my licence. 1

Ferdinand ordered the summary punishment of all deserters found in the city.

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1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 27 June 1489, f.97:

A my es fecha relacion que algunos de los cavalleros e peones desa cibdad que fueron para my servyr en la guerra de los moros desta ano sean buelto del real syn licencia.

Despite this measure, the desertion of the Jerez militia continued and Ferdinand was forced to write again three months later to demand that Jerez put an end to these desertions by seeing to it that the troops were paid for their time:

These troops serving here (at the siege of Baza) from this city have made representation to me, declaring that five months are now completed since they left the city to serve me in this Moorish war, while the aides that they have within the town (each tronco was responsible for paying the salary of a soldier) have not sent them more than three months salary. 1

On the same day, a letter from Benito de Vitoria, one of the Captains of Jerez's forces at the siege camp, arrived, in which the captain stated unequivocally that unless the city paid its troops at once "I swear that not a single trooper will be left here", and the city would be disgraced. However, despite Ferdinand's repeated demands the city did nothing to stop the flow of deserters, while the necessary payments to those who still remained at their posts were not made.

Furthermore, the city's continued reluctance to pay for the war manifested itself again soon afterward. Fernando de Galdo and Fernando de Ribadevia, who were the Crown's collectors for the next servicio, complained, in the cabildo meeting of 16 February 1491, that the city was not collecting it as quickly, or in the same way as on previous occasions:

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1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 3 October 1489, ff.133v-134:

Por parte de los aca doneros desa dicha cibdad me fue fecha relacion disiendo que sean cumplido agora cinco meses que ellos partieron desa cibdad para mi servyr en este guerra de los moros. A los quales dis que las ayudas e troncos que ellos tienen en esa cibdad non les han enbiado mas de la paga de los tres meses.

until now it does not appear that the city has ordered the collection of the service of men, animals and supplies in the customary way. From this their Highnesses could receive great disservice. 1

That the complaints voiced by Galdo and Ribadevia were justified was soon demonstrated. Once again, on 30 May 1491, a Jerez Captain wrote complaining of desertions, this time before the walls of Granada itself. According to a letter written by Marshal Goncalo de Saavedra, who was overall commander of the troops from Jerez:

Many of the troops from this city have returned and are returning each day, because last week all the maravedis owing from their salary for the second month were not brought to them. 2

Ferdinand once again had to intervene, demanding that the city send its troops all the salary for the previous month and for the present one.³

That desertion of municipal levies because of poor support was not just confined to Jerez but was a general phenomenon is shown by Ferdinand's letter to the Murcian city council written from his siege camp in the plains before Granada on 15 August 1491:

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1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 16 February 1491, f.38v:
Fasta oy paresce que la cibdad non da orden en el repartimiento de la dicha gente e bestias e mantenymientos segun que este cibdad lo tiene de uso e de costombre de faser en semejante caso de lo a sus altezas podria reciver deservycio.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 30 May 1491, f.134v:
Mucha de la dicha gente de esta cibdad se ha venydo de cada un dia a ella dexando el dicho servycio, dis que a cabsa de no les avya llevado ny enbiado la semana pasada todos los maravedis de sueldo deste segundo mes.
 3. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 30 May 1491, f.136v.

And now I have been informed that many of the troops remaining in my service have left without permission and that those that remain here have not received the aid that they must have from their towns from all of which will follow disservice to me. 1

Ferdinand ordered that the "said cities" pay their troops the amounts owing to them and make another repartimiento for "thirty days more".

Jerez's unwillingness to continue its contributions for the Granada enterprise continued even after the fall of the city. The city repeatedly refused to pay the salaries of certain troops that had been left in Granada under the command of Gonzalo de Saavedra,² and also slowed the payment of a 600,000 servicio which was to be used for repairing the Alahambra. On 27 August 1492 Hernando de Talavera, the new archbishop of Granada, wrote despairingly:

Although many days have passed only 200,000 maravedis have been paid while there remain 400,000 to be paid and we have written the corregidor Juan de Robles who had charge, by order of the King and Queen of collecting and sending it to this city in order to fulfil it. This he has not yet done nor completed and we are astonished at you for this, because it is known that these maravedis are for something very much in the service of their Highnesses. 3

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1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 15 August 1491:
E Agora a seydo ynformado que de la dicha gente que quedo en my servycio muchas dellas a ydo syn licencia e mandado e de la que aqui esta en my servycio non han seydo socorido de las ayudas que de sus pueblos ha de aver, de lo qual todo a my sea seguido deservycio.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 14 April 1492, f.53.
 3. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 27 June 1492, f.121v:
Como que ha muchos dias que avyan de ser pagados, solamente dellos se han pagado dosientas myll maravedis, e quedase devyendo quatrocientas myll maravedis e sobre ello avemos escripto al corregidor Juan de Robles que llevo cargo por mandado del rrey e de la reyna de lo faser para pagar e traer a esa dicha cibdad para que lo cunpliese, non se ha fecho nyn conplido, e de vosotros senores nos maravillamos mucho sabiendo que estas maravedis son para cosa tan conplidera al servycio de sus Altezas.

Naturally, because of the anarchy into which vast stretches of the Kingdom of Granada had been plunged with the conclusion of hostilities,¹ and the ever present possibility of a revolt by its recently subjugated population, any delay in repairing and reinforcing the Kingdom's strong-points could have the most serious consequences.

Desertions were only the most spectacular result of the cities' reluctance to pay the vastly increased costs of royal government. A less spectacular development was a fall in the rate of increase in income from "ordinary" rents. Income from this account had risen steeply from 94,401,000 maravedís in 1480 to 188,488,551 in 1488 with the heaviest rise taking place between 1482 and 1488. But, by 1489, the rise had levelled off sharply with income amounting to 189,798,154 maravedís. In 1490, income actually fell to 189,428,911 maravedís.²

A major reason for these disappointing returns may have been opposition from important cities like Jerez to the Crown-supported demands of tax-farmers for higher and higher rates and the inclusion of new items in the tax-rolls for alcavalas, almojarifadgos and other commercial taxes that largely made up income from "ordinary" rents. Pressure by tax-farmers for increased rates and inclusion of new items was continuous, while the attitude of the city toward them hardened noticeably from 1489. On 21 January 1489 Pedro de Alcocer, arrendador of the Jerez alcavala presented a royal letter authorizing him to collect

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 30 September 1492, f.80.

2. Ladero, La Hacienda, op. cit., p.27.

alcavala from cord-makers and chair-makers.¹ The city protested that this demand was unprecedented "because the said masters of these trades had never paid alcavala". A letter was immediately sent to the city's representative at court, Juan de Santiago, instructing him to demand an investigation. This was granted the city in a cedula of 28 March 1489 in which the Juez pesquisador Alvaro de Porras, then occupied in taking the "residence" of Juan de Robles, was ordered to investigate the city's charge that the new tax was an invasion of its rights.²

Local collectors of the alcavala were not to be put off so easily, however, and on 1 March 1490 they returned to demand the doubling of the rate for unmilled flour. According to the arrendadores their highnesses had allowed him to "collect" not less than ten per cent instead of the previous five per cent. Jerez refused to obey the royal order and demanded that:

This city be preserved in the rate it had always paid, which is that the flour that comes to its granary from outside pay alcavala at not more than 5 maravedis.³

At the same time as the Jerez city council was successfully resisting the demands of its own local tax-farmers for wider powers

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 21 January 1489, f.6.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 28 March 1489, f.17.

3. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 23 January 1490, f.71:

Guarda a esta cibdad el reparte della lo que syempre le a guardado que es que el pan que a ella e a su alfondiga trae a vender no se paga derechos de alcavala mas de cinco maravedis.

and increased revenue, it was also fighting a running battle against the arrendadores of the almojarifadgo of Seville. Despite the recognition of his right to collect in Jerez by the Crown, the city had refused to co-operate with him. On 6 July 1489 it was ordered to pay a fine of 800,000 maravedís because:

Of not having consented to the placing of the guards and assistants of the said almojarife in the city in accordance with the orders of the King and Queen as expressed in their letters; and because you did not aid the said almojarife and their assistants in confiscating the goods that were discharged at the ports of the Archbishopric of Seville and Cadiz without their licence and without paying the duty. 1

This sentence was the signal for increased activity on the part of the arrendadores of Seville throughout the entire archbishopric. They proceeded to put customs boats in all the rivers and guards on the roads and to confiscate all merchandise that had not paid the tax. So severe were their exertions that merchants were staying away from Jerez, with the result that local tax-collectors were suffering heavy losses.² Finally, the council obtained several royal orders that limited the powers of the almojarife of Seville. The first of these served to

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 27 May 1489, f.89v:

Non aver consentydo poner guardas e fasedores de los dichos almoxarifes en la dicha cibdad segund el rey e la reyna nuestros senores por sus cartas lo han mandado e para non aver querydo dar su voz e ayuda a los dichos almoxarifes e a sus fasedores para tomar las mercadaryas que se cargan e descargan en las puertas de la mar deste arcobispado de Sevilla e obispado de Cadis syn su licencia e syn las pagar sus derechos.

2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 2 July 1492, f.116v; 18 July 1492, f.126v.

nullify the effect of the sentence that had been handed down on 27 May 1489. Now, the law of Juan II that provided for the placing of customs boats in the rivers and officials in the towns was repeated, "as it had not been observed since 1490".¹

By seemingly repealing the law which had allowed Seville tax-farmers to collect from merchants in the Archbishopric, the Crown gave Jerez, and other cities, the justification they needed to ignore their authority. Gonzalo Baco, who arrived in July 1492 to take up his position as cogedor (assistant collector) of the tax ran into difficulties almost from the beginning of his stay. On 18 July he came to the council to complain that:

In this almojarifadgo of Seville he collected what was not his. ²

The cabildo's response to Baco's demand that the error he had made be explained to him, was to refuse to recognize his powers.³ That Jerez's obstruction of the almojarifes continued is shown by their request for a royal official to act as judge in their dispute with the city which had

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 16 April 1491, f.99.
2. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 18 July 1492, f.129:
En esto del almojarifadgo de Sevilla cobran e recabda lo que no es suyo.
3. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 28 August 1491, f.138.

acted to eject the guards they had placed there.¹

The marked reduction in the rate of income growth from "ordinary" rents that can be partially attributed to the cities increasing opposition to tax-farmers demands for higher rates coincided with a rapid rise in expenditure from the account. In 1482 only 80,226,000 maravedís had been spent but by 1488 expenditure had risen to some 112,758,537 maravedís.² This higher expenditure posed no problems, since disposable income from the account had reached 125,258,888 maravedís, leaving an excess of net income over expenditure of 12,500,351. However, this very favourable balance was soon to alter radically in the other direction. In the following year, due mainly to heavy granting of mercedes to pay for the war (these had jumped from 54,684,836 maravedís in 1488 to 64,215,864 in 1489) disposable income was only 125,346,432,³ despite a heavy drop in administrative expenses. With expenditure at the record level of 125,161,608,⁴ the surplus for 1489 was reduced to 184,824.

1. Archivo Municipal de Jerez de la Frontera, Actas Capitulares, 20 September 1492, f.200:

Another reason for the levelling off of the rise in returns from the ordinary income account might well have been the excessively heavy burden that was being placed on the administrative apparatus during this period. The demand for crown investigators by aljamas throughout Castile, the setting up of an occupation in captured parts of the Kingdom of Granada, and the maintenance of the royal army there, was placing a severe and unprecedented strain on what must have been a limited supply of qualified persons from which the administration could draw in order to back the tax-farmers in their attempts to increase their revenues from ordinary rents.

2. Ladero, La Hacienda, op. cit., p.35.
3. Ibid., p.27.
4. Ibid., p.35.

By 1491, with deductions for mercedes now at 68,157,481 and disposable income experiencing a slight rise to 130,318,443,¹ expenditures had increased to 143,648,335² and the account had fallen into a deficit of 13,329,892. In 1492 the account was still in deficit as disposable income amounted to 138,457,400, and expenditure had risen to 139,555,096.³ Although 1493 brought a small surplus of 518,696 on disposable income of 133,215,333 and expenditure of 132,696,637, by 1496, with mercedes scheduled to be paid from the account at over 87,000,000,⁴ it had once more fallen into deficit with income exceeding expenditure by 834,035 maravedís. The enormous growth in mercedes to be paid from the account of Alonso de Alcala and Rabi Mayor (Hernan Nunes Coronel), which really began in 1488, is a good indication of the extremely heavy pressure that the treasury was under during the latter half of the Granada war and during the immediate post-war period. It is only an indication because of the lack of complete income and expenditure records for other treasurers, but the steep rise in mercedes between 1490 and 1494 when some 21,086,551 maravedís were added (with 13,814,800 in 1493 alone) show the period of greatest stress.⁵

1. Ladero, La Hacienda, op. cit., p.27.

2. Ibid., p.35.

3. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, 51 Antiguo, "Sumario de la cuenta de Hernan Nunes".

4. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, 40 Antiguo, "Sumario breve del cargo e data del reyno ano de 1496".

5. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, 52 Antiguo, "Cargo e data de Hernan Nunes e Luys de Alcala, ano de 1493".
No complete set of figures for mercedes sold in 1492 are in existence.

Aside from rising expenditure and mercedes perhaps the heaviest new expense that had to be faced by Luis de Alcala and Hernan Nunes Coronel at the end of the Granada war were those connected with Granada. The 4,000,000 maravedis of new "tenancy" added during 1491 are an indication of the high costs of maintaining the Castilian presence in the subjugated parts of that kingdom. That considerable forces were going to be required there after the war was clear by 1491. A series of small revolts broke out in that year in several places along the Rio de Almeria, and these were not only costly to put down, but also reduced the profit expected by their arrendador, Israel Interprete. Israel demanded compensation for his losses:

In the year 1491 six places along Almeria river rebelled against their highnesses, for which they have to make a discount for me. And the amount that should be discounted as verified from the Moorish account books of the city of Almeria from 1491, including the diezmo del pan and sheep tolls, comes to 20,000 reales. 1

This revolt and the later one that was to claim the life of Alonso de Aguilar must have been part of a whole series in the province that made the stationing of a large occupying force necessary and the repair of the Kingdom's fortresses a prime necessity.

Although no detailed account for the Kingdom of Granada has come

1. A.C. Simancas, Expedientes de Hacienda, 2-282:

Otrosy que se revellaron el dicho ano de noventa e uno contra el servycio de sus altetas los seys lugares del Rio de Almeria, por lo qual es me ha de fazer descuento; e el dicho valor de lo que asy se me ha de descentar, verificado por los libros de los moros de la cibdad de Almeria del dicho ano pasado con la renta del diezmo del pan e derechos de ganados monta veynte myll reales.

down to us for 1491 or 1492, we do have several useful ones for 1493, which serve to indicate the expenses the Crown had to meet there in the immediate post-war period.

For the year 1493 gross income from the Kingdom of Granada amounted to some 19,433,616 maravedís, while net income was 11,128,016 maravedís after 7,883,000 maravedís in mercedes and over 300,000 in other charges had been deducted. Of this gross figure by far the largest contribution was made by the city of Granada and its environs which paid some 11,418,724. Malaga was next with 3,187,500 and then Almeria which paid 2,436,794, while none of the remaining three collection areas (Almurecan, Baca or Guadix) yielded more than 860,000 maravedís.

That Granada ran at a huge loss to the royal treasury instead of providing the expected increase in rents is shown by the expenditure sheet of this account. A total of 16,414,400 maravedís was spent, leaving an overall deficit of 5,286,384. In order to prevent rebellion an army of 2,176 foot soldiers (aside from the troops maintained by Robles) was paid by the Crown for the full year. This alone cost 11,884,400. Other military expenses included: for maintaining a fleet between Spain and Africa to prevent any invasion 4,000,000 maravedís;¹ and 820,000 maravedís in tenancy payments.² In order to cover these expenses Hernan Nunes Coronel and Luis de Alcala found themselves

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1. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, 52 Antiguo, "el dicho cargo e data de Granada ano de 1493".
 2. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, 52 Antiguo, "tenencias de Granada ano de 1493".

having to pay some 7,394,400 maravedís to Juan Alvarez de Toledo, the Crown official in charge of making payments in Granada.¹ In addition to the contribution made by Coronel and Alcala, some 5,000,000 maravedís were to be drawn from the account of Gabriel Sanchez, who had charge of income from the order of Calatrava and 2,521,000 from the surplus of other accounts, the sum remaining was drawn from miscellaneous sources.²

With heavy Granadine expenses, vastly increased mercedes and the pressure on administrative resources, it is no wonder that the "ordinary" income account began to register declines in 1491-96, while the pronounced deficit of 1491 is perfectly natural considering the fact that on the one hand the Crown had to meet the expenditure of the war, while on the other it was forced to garrison and repair Granadine fortresses in order to secure its rear.

The "ordinary" income account was not the only one in which the Crown could anticipate a heavy drop in income after the conclusion of hostilities. As has already been pointed out in our previous discussion of Crown finances, two major "extraordinary" income accounts had been developed during the war - the Hermanidad subsidy and the Crusades. Both these accounts were a source of difficulty in the immediate post-war period.

During its fifth prorogation, which ran from 15 August 1490 to

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1. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, 52 Antiguo, "cargo e data de Hernan Nunes e Luys de Alcala ano de 1493".
 2. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Rentas, 52 Antiguo, "cuenta de Juan Alvarez de Toledo".

15 August 1493, the Hermanidad "ordinary" payment yielded some 102,678,664 maravedís more or less evenly divided among the three years. The repartimiento de peones or special subsidy, however, was only scheduled to run for the first two years (15 August 1490 - 15 August 1492) so that from 15 August 1492, for the next fiscal year, the Crown could expect a drop in revenue from this source of some 24,132,381 maravedís, while the subsidy from Galicia was to only run from 1490-91, so that for 1492 and 1493 the Crown could anticipate a total fall in revenue from this source of 12,237,466 maravedís. Furthermore, even when the special subsidy (repartimiento de peones) was renewed during the sixth prorogation which was to run from 15 August 1493 to 15 August 1496, it was applied only for the last two years.¹ Thus from 15 August 1492 until 15 August 1494 the Crown could not expect any revenue whatever from what had been one of its most important sources throughout the war.

The same dangerous gap was to be repeated in the case of the other great extraordinary account - the Crusade, where collection was to be interrupted from 1492-1495.²

Even when the preaching of the Crusade was renewed on a more or less permanent basis, revenue never reached its wartime level. While in the seven years from 1485 to 1492 Francisco Gonzalez de Sevilla received some 505,805,871 maravedís from the Crusade,³ in the eight years

1. A.G. Simancas, Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas, Primera Epoca, 134.

2. J. Goñi Gaztambide, Historia de la bula de la Crusada en Espana (Vitoria, 1958), p.115.

3. Azcona, op. cit., p.534.

1495-1503, when its collection was re-assumed by Morales, only 169,045,911 maravedís were obtained. With the end of the reconquista it was to be expected that the Crusade would be less popular. An appeal based on the Turkish threat in the Eastern Mediterranean could never have the same success as one concerned with a religious war on the borders of Castile.

In addition to unfavourable balances in "ordinary" income accounts, and the interruption of its two most important "extraordinary" revenue sources, the Crown came under increasing pressure to repay the huge loans that it had contracted during the latter part of the war.

The greatest amount of debt was accumulated after the decision to attack Baza in February 1489. In preparation for this campaign some 145,809,985 maravedís was borrowed,¹ of which some 75,705,467 maravedís still remained to be paid in 1492. Much of this sum was gathered during the forced loans announced on 3 February 1489, when a schedule of contributions was drawn up for every city.² Although repayment was promised within one year demands on the treasury were so heavy that lenders frequently had to wait three or more years.

Already by 1487 the Crown had been contracting loans for which it had most possibility to repay in the time originally stated. On 13 March 1487 a forced loan of 500,000 maravedís was taken from private persons in Murcia.³ Although a letter had been sent to the city

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1. M.A. Ladero Quesada, Milicia y economía en la guerra de Granada (Valladolid, 1964), p.80.
 2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 3 February 1489, f.24.
 3. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 13 March 1487.

promising repayment within one year with funds to be taken from the Crusade,¹ the official encharged with repayment defaulted and the loan was still unpaid in January 1490.² So low had confidence fallen in the Crown's ability to repay these loans, that by December 1488 its promissory notes were selling at greatly reduced premiums.³ It was perhaps because of this distrust by lenders that the Crown was forced to cancel another 500,000 maravedís forced loan that it had tried to collect in April 1489.

That the Murcian lenders' lack of confidence in government paper was justified is shown by the issue of a vast amount of the so-called juro al quitar between 1490 and 1491. These promissory notes, of which some 100,000,000 maravedís worth were issued, were frequently left unpaid and amounted to a virtual default on the face value of the loan.

Another symptom of the Crown's financial difficulties was its re-conversion of much of the debt contracted in Valencia. The city had lent some 900,000 reales or 15,300,000 maravedís in three loans made between 22 August and 23 December 1489.⁴ Of these loans, the largest, for some 525,000 maravedís was effected on 23 December 1489 and guaranteed on a crown of gold and diamonds and other jewels. Despite strenuous

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1. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Cartas Reales 1478-1488, 5 February 1487, f.199.
 2. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Actas Capitulares, 26 January 1490.
 3. Archivo Municipal de Murcia, Cartas Reales 1478-1488, December 1488, ff.211-213.
 4. Francisco Sevillano Colom, "Las Empresas nacionales de los Reyes Católicos y la aportación económica de la ciudad de Valencia", Hispania LVII (1954), p.542.

efforts to recover these pledges in 1491,¹ the crown and other jewels remained in Valencia until 1496, when, although the loan had not been repaid, the city lent them to Isabella for a state occasion.² Then, beginning on 10 February 1492, the Crown began a series of reconversions of its previous debts. On this occasion some 120,000 reales were reconverted while on 30 September 1495 and 12 October 1489 some 30,000 reales and 440,000 reales were reconverted,³ the latter quantity representing a reconversion of all loans still outstanding from before 1499.⁴ At the end of 1492, although some 74,413,047 maravedís had been either paid or situated in juro de quitar, the Crown still owed at least 85,446,578 maravedís to both public and private lenders.⁵ In order to repay certain individuals the Crown had to resort to selling some of its most important possessions. Thus, Montefrio was sold to Alonso de Aguilar to repay a 7,000,000 maravedís loan, Casares to the Duke of Cadiz for 10,000,000, and Carcera and Hinez to Alfonso Carillo de Acuna to repay part of a 16,000,000 maravedí loan.⁶

The Crown's growing financial weakness and the tying down of much of the royal army in Granada, led to a recrudescence of private wars among the nobility, that was beginning to assume dangerous proportions by 1489. In that year the long dispute between the Marquis of Cadiz and

1. A.G. Simancas, Contaduria Mayor de Cuentas, Primera Epoca, 124.

2. Colom, op. cit., p.546.

3. Ibid., p.549.

4. Ibid., p.550.

5. Azcona, op. cit., p.535.

6. Ladero, La Hacienda, op. cit., p.31.

the Duke of Medina Sidonia, over the former's tunny-fishery off Cadiz, burst into violence. Troops sent by the Duke attacked the fishery and almost destroyed it:

In May of this year some cavalry and foot coming by land, and others by sea, went to the tunny-fishery near Cadiz island under the orders of D. Enrique de Guzman Duke of Medina Sidonia and burned the houses and provisions and boats and nets. 1

Juan Daza was sent to Andalusia to investigate the attack and to collect a fine that had been imposed on the Duke. So damaging had his attack been that he was ordered to pay 1,000,000 maravedis to compensate the fishermen for their losses and a further million to the Marquis.

Somewhat later in the same year, a serious dispute broke out between Don Pedro Manrique, Duke of Najara, and Bernaldino de Velasco. The dispute took on dangerous proportions when the two families mobilized troops and called on their supporters from the city of Palencia:

They are being joined by nobles, knights and others from the city of Palencia and other towns and cities. 2

Once again the Crown had to dispatch a royal commissioner, Juan de Ayala, to the province, armed with full investigatory powers.

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 30 September 1491, f.282: Sepades que en el mes de mayo deste presente ano algunos gentes de caballo e de pie por tierra, e otros gentes por mar, fueron por mandado de don Enrique de Guzman duque de Medina Sidonia, a la almadrana cerca de la ysla de Cadiz e quemaron las casas, e asy mysmo quemaron las provysiones de pan e vino e algunos varcos e redes e aparejos.
2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 11 December 1490, f.296: E que asy mysmo les acuden e ayudan algunos grandes e cavalleros e algunas gentes asy de la cibdad de Palencia como de otros cibdades e villas.

In the following year the same commissioner was sent to Carrion to investigate a dangerous conflict between Luis Hurtado de Mendoza and Juan Manrique. Although political control of the city had long been contested between the two houses, the Crown now had reason to expect open fighting to break out.¹

Nowhere did these outbursts against royal authority reach such grave proportions as in Vizcaya during September 1491. A royal Juez pesquisador, the licentiate Cristobel de Toro, who had been sent to the province early in the year, was rash enough to permit a member of the Hortagia family to continue building a castle, while denying a building permit to the "Cabreta" and other families.² This favouritism and the other moves that were made by Torres during his term of office stirred up the most intense enmity toward him; finally culminating in an armed rising by many of the most important families in the province:

We know that because the licentiate Cristobel de Torres executed justice on certain persons in the said county where he was our Juez pesquisador many of its inhabitants rose against him with great commotions and assemblies and laid seige to the city of Bilbao for more than eight days in order to capture and execute the said investigator. ³

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 10 June 1491, f.51.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 2 June 1492, f.285.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, July 1492, f.88:
 Bien sabiamos como a cabsa que el licenciado Xristobal de Toro, estando por nuestra mandado juez pesquisador en el dicho condado fiso justicia de ciertos ombres por lo qual dis que se levantaron contra el muchos vecinos e moradores del dicho condado con grandes asomadas e ayuntamientos e la cercaron en la villa de Vilvao e la Tovyeron cercado por espacio de ocho dias e mas e combataron la dicha villa para prender e matar al dicho pesquisador.

He was only saved from their wrath by the protection afforded by a number of friendly nobles. These later wrote to complain that the rebels, ignoring a royal prohibition, had constituted themselves in a junta and wanted an illegal province-wide tax to pay their legal expenses:

And others it is said that they made a repartimiento in the entire county, this being prohibited by us. ¹

Despite the royal prohibition those who had supported Torres, and helped to uphold Crown authority in Vizcaya, were included in the tax-roll and forced to pay.

In its relations with the rebel junta that had been formed to resist Torres, the Crown once more revealed its weakness. At first a royal commissioner, Alfonso de Castillo, had been sent to Vizcaya with orders to find those responsible for the junta and for organizing the forces besieging Torres. He was ordered to detain those responsible, confiscate their property and send them to court under guard. However, after Castillo had presented his orders before the junta it refused to recognize it, claiming that it was prejudicial, and unfair.² The Crown, now forced with the choice of relying on its local supporters and sending in troops to quell the rebellion, as it had done with Rodrigo Osoria in 1486, or bowing to the will of the junta, chose the latter course. Torres was removed as Juez pesquisador while Castillo was to

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, July 1492, f.88:
Luego dió que fisieron cierto repartimiento e derrama de dinero por todo el dicho condado, estando por nos mandado que el dicho repartimiento no se fisiese e aun que fisiera.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 13 September 1491, f.297.

continue his investigation but he was ordered:

Not to imprison or confiscate the property of those you find responsible, but only bring the investigation to court so that justice may be done. ¹

In 1492, with the end of the Grenadine conflict and the return of troops sent there by nobles, violence and disobedience broke out on every hand. In July a special commissioner had to be sent to stop Bernaldino Suarez de Mendoza from completing a castle he was building in order to subjugate Madrid.² Around Leon it was noted that very recently there had been a dangerous upsurge in castle-building by the local nobility from which they sallied to rob, burn and kill in the surrounding countryside.³ The rural anarchy of the previous reign seemed to be almost repeating itself.

Royal securities given to protect personal property seemed to carry less weight than in the past. Many of these were broken by nobles who either refused to accept the decision of the royal council in boundary disputes, or who wished to subjugate the town under their control. Several of the most important Andalusian houses combined in February 1492 to oppose a decision awarding certain lands belonging to them to the city of Seville.⁴ In another serious disobedience the "alcalde de los

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 13 September 1491, f.180:
A los que por la dicha pesquisa fallardes culpantes no les prendades los cuerpos nyn les sequestredes sus bienes salvo que la trayades e presentades ante nos por que asy trayda la dicha pesquisa e vista se faga lo que de justicia se deva fazer.
2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, July 1492, f.130.
3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 13 September 1492, f.142.
4. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, February 1492, f.208.

Doncelas" attempted to seize forcibly certain property that had been sequestered from Alonso Fernandez de Cordoba on royal orders.¹ Pedro Manrique, taking advantage of the war to increase his control over his own vassals, twice broke royal securities given to him. In the case of his towns of Ezcaray, Curraquier and Valgonon, he not only did not allow the royal "security" to be prevented, but offered his protection against royal justice for those of his party prepared to murder persons opposed to him.²

That a serious outbreak of private war was expected soon after the conclusion of peace in Granada is attested to by a letter sent from court that gave full judicial powers to Juan de Silva alferez mayor of Seville. Silva was warned of the possibility of widespread conflict embracing most of the important families:

There could be differences between the Dukes of Medina, Sidonia and Cadiz, the Count of Cabra and Don Alfonso de Aguilar and other nobles of the Kingdom of Andalusia and since because of this there could occur the gathering of troops and outbreak of violence from which would follow great disservice and harm. ³

In order to control the situation Silva was given full powers not only to bring about peace by negotiation, but also to order troop

1. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 16 February 1492, f.281.

2. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, September 1492, f.43.

3. A.G. Simancas, Registro General del Sello, 20 June 1492, f.85:
Podria ser o ovyesen algunas diferencias entre los duques de Medyna Sydonia e de Caliz e el conde de Cabra e don Alfonso de Aguilar e otros cavalleros del dicho reyno de Andalusia, e a cabssa que se podria recrecer entre ellos algunos escandalos e juntamyentos de gentes e otros danos de que nos podria serguir deservicio e dano.

formations to be dissolved and impose fines. He was to call upon all officials in the province to provide him with assistance.

Columbus had been in Spain some seven years (1485-1492) before his project was approved by the Spanish monarchs and their advisors. During that period he was repeatedly examined by the so-called Talavera commission and given various small grants of money but never actually encouraged to believe that final approval would come. Historians have normally explained the long delay as the result of the crown's preoccupation over the war in Granada. According to the distinguished Columbian scholar Juan Manzano Manzano:

Until the end of the campaign against the Moors the monarchs, who were very short of financial resources during that period, were not disposed to undertake any new enterprise. ¹

This view is shared by Morison, Azcona, Manuel Ballesteros Gaibrois and many others and is also supported by Las Casas in his account of Columbus' dismissal from court in 1490. ²

The project was only accepted finally because of its small cost and risk as was pointed out by Luis de Santangal just when Columbus was about to leave Spain. Going to the monarchs Santangal said:

That he was astonished to see that her Highness, who had always shown a resolute spirit in matters of consequence, should lack it now for an enterprise of such nature that if any other prince should undertake what the Admiral offered to her, it would be a very great damage to the

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1. Juan Manzano Manzano, Cristobal Colon siete anos decisivos en su vida, 1485-1492 (Madrid, 1964), p.14.
 2. Antonio Ballesteros Beretta, Cristobal Colon y el Descubrimiento de America (Barcelona, 1945), p.491.

crown, and a grave reproach to her. 1

Taking heart from his words and from his offer to finance the major part of the expedition along with Columbus himself Isabella consented.

An additional reason for the delay was the hostility of the Talavera commission. Our main sources for the commissions' recommendations are the Historia del Almirante D. Cristobal Colon written by his son Hernando around 1536 and the Historia General de las Indias of Bartolome Las Casas which was composed between 1552 and 1561 and which utilized the work of Hernando Colon.² Both of these works present us with a distorted picture because both try to pretend that Columbus was looking for a "new world" from the first and therefore present some of the commissions' objections as if they pertained to that project. Thus Hernando states that the commissioners objected that:

Since at the end of so many thousands of years so many wise scientists and sailors had had no knowledge of these lands that it was unlikely that the Admiral would have more knowledge than all these past and present. 3

In addition, the commissioners said that the places to which Columbus wished to sail were virtually uninhabited being in the so-called torrid zone, that the Ocean was too large to be crossed in the time Columbus had predicted, and that if Columbus sailed straight west he would not be able to return because since the Earth was round this would be like sailing up a mountain.⁴ Because of these objections and the war the monarchs

1. Hernando Colon, Historia del Almirante D. Cristobal Colon, (Madrid, 1932), ch.14, 1 118-19, in Morison, op.cit., p.136.

2. Beretta, op. cit., p.72.

3. Ibid., p.487.

4. Ibid., p.488.

dismissed Columbus although offering him the possibility of a further hearing.¹

This presentation of the commission's objections to Columbus by Hernando Colon, Las Casas and modern historians like Ballesteros Beretta is doubtful on several grounds. Neither of the two men were contemporaries of Columbus nor were their works composed soon after the events described. Furthermore, since both men were trying to magnify Columbus's achievements and show the stupidity of those who opposed his project they present it as if it were a uniquely brilliant idea which shines all the more brightly against the obtuseness of its opponents. Thus Manzano Manzano, basing himself on Hernando Colon gives us a picture of Columbus surrounded by laughing courtiers and "the unanimous objections of all contemporary scientists to his Atlantic project".²

This was far from the case. The commissioners and Columbus must have had the same terms of reference and referred to the same authorities (or authorities of equal weight) to back their arguments. Columbus, far from lacking the support of contemporary scientists for his views had many of the most prominent authorities on his side. One of the major pieces of evidence that he must have presented to the commission was a map sent to him by the famous Florentine scientist Toscanelli which served to approve Marco Polo's addition of some 30 degrees of longitude to the easternmost point of China as described by Ptolomy and the fabulous island of Cipangu

1. Beretta, op. cit., p.488.

2. Manzano Manzano, op. cit., p.15.

some 1,500 miles out to sea.¹ In addition to the Toscanelli map Columbus owned Pierre d'Ailly's Imago Mundi published in 1410 and two other tracts by the same man all of which supported a vast extension of Eurasia at the expense of the Atlantic and told of the ease of a voyage from Spain to the end of Asia:

The length of the land toward the Orient is much greater than Ptolomy admits ... Arim (the terrestrial umbilicus, halfway on Ptolomy's habitable world of 180 degrees) is not merely a distance of 90 degrees from the end of the habitable Earth on the side of the Orient it is much farther, because the length of the habitable Earth on the side of the Orient is more than half of the circuit of the globe. For according to the philosophers and Pliny, the ocean which stretches between the extremity of further Spain and the Eastern edge of India is of no great width. For it is evident that this sea is navigable in a very few days. 2

The Historia Rerum Ubique Gestarum of Aeneas Sylvius (1477) also served Columbus as a valuable suppliment to Imago Mundi. Although not as favourable to Columbus's notions as the former work it reproduced Ptolomy's extension of Asia to the parallel of Thule.³

Furthermore, the Portuguese monarchy, which had more experience of exploration than any in Europe was very interested in the Columbian project. In 1485 just after Columbus left Portugal king John commissioned Fernao Dulmo and Joao Estreito to sail west into the Atlantic in order to discover Antillia.⁴ Columbus himself was welcomed to return to Lisbon in 1488 despite the failure of the Dulmo expedition with the king even

1. Morison, op. cit., p.89.

2. Ibid., p.122.

3. Ibid., p.124.

4. Ibid., p.97.

offering him protection from his debtors.¹ Even after Columbus's return from his first voyage the Nuremberg astronomer Hieronymus Muntzer proposed his fellow citizen Martin Behaim (who had been at the Portuguese court) for a voyage to China sailing west.²

With all this support from famous contemporary scientists and scholars and the favour of Juan II of Portugal (Ferdinand and Isabella could hardly have been unaware of Columbus' trip to Lisbon in 1488) it is highly unlikely that the commission would have made its recommendations on scientific grounds. For one thing none of the commission members were scientists, instead they were lawyers or administrators headed by Hernando de Talavera, a member of the Queen's council. The commissioners were, however, competent to give their opinions on matters of state and this they probably did in the case of the Columbian expedition. When the commission began its proceedings in 1485 the crown's financial condition was healthy and appeared likely to remain so. Remunerative sources of income had been found inside Spain so there was little reason to undertake foreign exploration as the Portuguese crown had done. In 1492, the position was very different, as we have seen, and the possible income from overseas exploration could not be ignored. Instead of undertaking the expedition at a moment of strength, utilizing all the resources released by the conclusion of the Grenadine conflict as contended by other historians, the Spanish crown resorted to the Columbian expedition in a moment of dangerous financial and political weakness. It was a

1. Morison, op. cit., p.100.

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dynamic response to this crisis and was by no means the safe, inexpensive venture described by Hernando Colon through the mouth of Luis de Santangal. It not only involved probably difficulties with Portugal but entailed the purchase of one-half the port of Palos for some 16,400,000 maravedís in order to keep possible revenues out of the hands of the Andalusian nobility.¹ Surely it was the expense and risk of the enterprize for the Spanish crown and not geography that must have concerned the monarchs' advisers and caused them to delay their approval. While crown finances were adequate and the political situation was quiet there was no need to embark on any new money-making ventures but the financial and political situation of 1492 signaled a change of policy.

That two men who had been closely associated with Crown finances during the war intervened to save Columbus from leaving Spain should point up the significance of the financial crisis in determining Crown policy. One of these, Luis de Santangal, had been treasurer of the Hermidadad and would thus be in a position to warn Ferdinand and Isabella of the reduction in collections for the Hermidadad "extraordinary" contribution.²

The real significance of the intervention of Hernando de Talavera Prior of Prado has long been a subject of controversy. Recently a theory has been put forward by Manuel Fernandez Gimenez and Perez Embid to the effect that Talavera was called in to resolve the Queen's moral doubts about undertaking the Columbian expedition after she had sworn to

1. Manzano Manzano, op. cit., p.351.

2. For Santangal's role in convincing Ferdinand and Isabella see: Hernando Colón, Historia del Almirante D. Cristobal Colon, I, M. Serrano y Sanz ed. (Madrid, 1932), pp.123-5.

restrict the range of Castilian exploration in the treaty of Tordesillas.¹ As the Queen's confessor Talavera was the person most concerned with solving these moral problems of government and so was named to head the commission that considered Columbus's proposal. The inclusion of Rodrigo Maldonado who was the Castilian plenipotentiary at the signing of the treaty would seem to lend support to this theory.

According to Gimenez and Embid it was Talavera's strict interpretation of the Queen's moral obligation to the Portuguese under the treaty that caused the delay in approval of the Columbian expedition:

Thus in the beginning of the Columbian project the problem was not economic, nor scientific, nor juridical ... It was the moral problem of conscience ... of knowing if after having at Alcaçovas sworn to renounce all maritime enterprizes except in the area of the Canaries the Queen could aid Columbus without committing the gravest sin. Until this problem was resolved favourably for Columbus by the intervention of theologians less narrow than Fray Hernando they could not pass to discuss other problems of discovery because the negative of the Queen's confessor, supported by that of the plenipotentiary at Alcaçovas, made all scientific, economic or juridical discussion of the problem useless. 2

However, a congratulatory letter addressed to Talavera in 1493 by Pedro Martin de Angleria indicates that Talavera's voice was added to that of Santangal in favouring the expedition:

"According to what I understand, without your council Columbus would not have carried out the enterprize". 3

Talavera's importance to the crown was not so much as Queen's confessor

1. Embid, op. cit., p.229.

2. Ibid., p.230.

3. Manzano Manzano, op. cit., p.271.

as its chief financial officer. From the beginning of the reign he had been engaged on the most important tasks in this area handling the great reform of mercedes of 1480. During the war for Granada he was made commissioner of the Crusade the most important and remunerative of the extraordinary income accounts and had wide responsibilities for the supply and payment of troops. That he was concerned with crown finances personally and not solely through secretaries is shown by his correspondence with Luis de Santangal in April 1791. When he requested Santangal to send him 4,500,000 maravedís from Hermanidad funds in order to pay for troops sent from Molina.¹

As a Crusade commissioner and its chief financial officer Talavera's opinion as to the desirability of undertaking overseas exploration would have been profoundly influenced by the fact that the crown could not expect money from this source in 1492 or 1493, while as an experienced money manager and cleric he could well have felt that the Crusade would never again yield the returns of the Grenadine war. Furthermore, as Crusade treasurer he had been intimately involved in the greatest of the crown's new extraordinary income accounts and it would have therefore been perfectly natural for him to favour the creation of another such account as a possible solution for the crown's pressing financial difficulties. According to Las Casas Talavera had always been among Columbus's friends but, of course, it was unnecessary for him to come

1. A.G. Simancas, Escribania Mayor de Cuentas Legajo 124, 20 April 1491.

2. Beretta, op. cit., p.446.

out in full support of such an expensive project unless it became absolutely necessary.

The involvement of two other men in the decision to send out Columbus is an additional indication that it was made on political and financial grounds and not on moral or scientific ones. The first of these was Gabriel Sanchez the treasurer of Aragon to whom Columbus sent a copy of his letter from Lisbon (the other went to Santangal). Sanchez was a person of vast power and responsibility in the kingdom of Aragon and engaged in large-scale business enterprizes using public money.¹ His charge of treasurer of Aragon made him one of the most powerful political figures in the dual monarchy.

The second of these men was Juan Cabrero, camarero to Ferdinand. The nature of his office (being present at the robing and disrobing of the King, holding the secret seal, keeping the keys) brought him into daily contact with the king. That contact brought intimacy is indicated by Oviedo who tells us that when he was old and nearly blind Ferdinand "caused a small chair to be given to him by his side; and he conversed with the king cordially and as a person who loved him. And thus during the most arduous state business he was admitted and his opinion taken".²

Several letters from Ferdinand and from Columbus himself prove Cabrera's intervention in the final Columbian decision. In 1510, Ferdinand wrote Diego Colon to tell him that he was not going to award more Indians to any aside from those who were directly connected with

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2. Beretta, op. cit., p.533.

affairs of the Indies and "Juan Cabrero my camarero to whom I give them because he worked so that the Admiral your father obtained his enterprize". Columbus himself in a letter to his son Diego mentions that the "senor Camarero de su Alteza" as well as Fray Diego de Deza were responsible for his remaining in Spain in 1492 "just as I was about to depart".¹

Thus the Talavera "commission" was most probably not an actual body which met regularly to consider the geographic or moral side of the Columbian question but was a group of the most important financial and political advisors of the crown, some of whom were seconded to consider the implications of Columbus' proposal for crown policy. Only one of these men was a cleric and even he had been mainly concerned with finances since 1480. The rest, Cabrera, Santangal, Quintanilla, Sanchez, were all top political and financial officers not scientists, mathematicians or theologians and were asked for their advice about things they were competent to discuss, not about science or theology. The decision to send out Columbus was thus delayed for reasons of State (revenue from overseas trade and exploration was unnecessary while the crown's finances were healthy) and accepted when reasons of State seemed to dictate acceptance.

Viewed against this background of financial crisis and social unrest the Columbian expedition emerges as at once a symbol of the crisis and an ingenious way of surmounting it. If the political price that had to be paid for the lucrative alliance with the towns was too high (the

1. Beretta, op. cit., p.534.

expulsion of the Jews) and reduction in the powers of the corregidor, if revenues from "ordinary" income accounts were falling and some "extraordinary" ones were in danger of extinction, then a source of income had to be sought that was outside the control of nobility and urban patriciate and that could shore up the tottering base of Crown finances. The answer to this was to resort, once again, to an attempt to make Castile into a major power in the exploration, trade and development of newly discovered territory.

The Portuguese crown was already deriving substantial revenues from its support of explorations down the African coast, and had been so since at least 1475, when the principal Kingdom of Benin was discovered. This discovery was particularly useful, because the Kingdom produced a high grade of pepper comparable to that imported from India,¹ and pepper marketing had been a royal monopoly from the beginning of the explorations.² Revenues had increased markedly ever since the construction of the factory-fort of Sao Jorge de Mina built to protect the trade in gold and silver that had developed since 1471, along the coast of modern Ghana.³ A few years after the fortress's construction the commerce in gold alone amounted to some 170,000 gold doblas.⁴

Knowing the value of this commerce to the Portuguese, and hoping to

1. J.H. Parry, The Age of Reconnaissance (New York, 1964), p.133.

2. Ibid., p.136.

3. Ibid., p.133.

4. Florentino Pérez Embid, Los descubrimientos en el Atlántico y la rivalidad Castellano-Portuguesa hasta el tratado de Tordesillas (Seville, 1948), p.222.

derive revenue from it themselves, Ferdinand and Isabella were quick to assert Castilian claims to Guinea in a royal letter that was issued on 19 August 1475. The letter not only claims Castilian primacy in the conquest of "Africa and Guinea", but also clearly revealed the Crown's financial interest. Past neglect of Castilian rights had deprived the treasury of the royal fifth (quinta) of all merchandise to which it was legally entitled. The Crown now planned to organize these voyages around collection of the quinta and named two collectors: Antonio Rodríguez de Lillo, a royal councillor, and Gonzales de Coronado. No one was permitted to go to Guinea or Africa without the licence of these men, nor land cargoes without paying the royal fifth.¹ This remarkable manifestation of royal desire to control and derive revenue from the Guinea trade received further reinforcement in another royal order issued on 6 December 1476 which obliged any ship going to trade in Guinea to carry a royal escribano. Obviously, this person's main responsibility was to assess the ship's cargo in order to make sure the royal fifth was being fully paid.²

For a time the policy was successful. Several records exist of merchants requesting royal licences to make trading voyages during 1477,³ while confiscations made during 1478 show that the payment of the quinta was being strictly enforced. Pulgar, while probably over-estimating the

1. Florentino Pérez Embid, Los descubrimientos en el Atlántico y la rivalidad Castellano-Portuguesa hasta el tratado de Tordesillas (Seville, 1948), p.184.

2. Ibid., p.185.

3. Ibid., p.186.

importance of revenues derived from these sources tells us that in 1478 "of all the gold that they brought from that land their highnesses received the fifth part from which they obtained considerable income".¹

However, by the beginning of 1479 Portuguese naval pressure had become so intense that a system of convoys had to be introduced. The convoy system marked the beginning of the end of Castilian efforts. Not only were they difficult to organize, but proved ineffective in making up for the superiority of the Portuguese in seamanship and local navigational experience. Time after time these convoys suffered disaster culminating in the almost total loss of 35 ships making up one sent out in 1478.²

Another, smaller expedition, organized in 1479, was surprised in the area of the Mina by a superior Portuguese squadron and conducted to Lisbon. The men and ships were only released on the conclusion of peace, though their cargo was kept for Portugal.³

The peace of Alcacovas which recognized the defeat of the Portuguese invasion, also recognised the defeat of Castilian efforts to contest Portuguese control of African trade. This was the effect of a clause which stated that the Portuguese were to have exclusive possession of Guinea, its mines and commerce and:

Any other islands, coasts or lands discovered or to be discovered, the islands of Madeira, Puerto Santo and Desierta and all the islands that are now discovered, and any others that they find and conquer below Guinea. 4

1. Pulgar, Crónica 1, p.133, in Embid, p.186.

2. Ibid., p.210.

3. Ibid., p.212.

4. Archivo de las Indias, Patronato, est.2, caj.1, leg.1/18 (Sig antigua) in Embid, p.217.

Not only was the exclusive right of Portugal to trade and discovery along the African coast guaranteed in this treaty, but Ferdinand and Isabella promised to prevent their subjects from going to these lands without a Portuguese licence. If the renunciation of Juana's rights to the Castilian throne was a major victory for Ferdinand and Isabella, the recognition of Portugal's African claims by the Castilian rulers must be seen as a major diplomatic triumph for Portugal. Of all the recently discovered territories, the only ones remaining for Castilian exploitation and development were the Canaries, in whose direction they were also permitted to explore.¹

Castile's first serious attempt to become a major power in African exploration and trade had come to an ignominious end. The opportunity for income from quintas that had seemed so attractive during the Portuguese war, was no longer so important when, during the Grenadine conflict, rising returns from "ordinary" rents, subsidies and "extraordinary" rents made them superfluous. Only the financial and political crisis that developed at the end of the war caused Ferdinand and Isabella to entertain once again the notion of deriving income from overseas trade.

Furthermore, there can be no doubt that whatever Columbus's own purpose in undertaking the expedition Ferdinand and Isabella viewed the voyage as an effort to open up a trade in Eastern commodities that would bring revenue to the treasury. The interest of both Columbus and the

1. Archivo de las Indias, Patronato, est.2, caj.1, leg.1/18 (Sig antigua) in Embid, p.218.

monarchs in deriving income from an Eastern trade is clear from the Capitulaciones made with him in which he is allowed to keep one tenth of all the "gold, silver and spices" found in his jurisdictions.¹

Columbus was also careful to insert many references to Eastern commodities in his letter concerning the results of the first voyage. He asserts that with just a little help from the crown "will give them as much gold as they may need". He also promised:

Spice and cotton, as much as their highnesses shall command; and mastic, as much as they shall order to be shipped and which, up to now has been found only in Greece, in the island of Chios and the Seignory sells it for what it pleases; and aloe wood as much as they shall order to be shipped. And I believe that I have found rhubarb and cinnamon. 2

In order to control this trade Columbus reports that he has taken possession of a good harbour called Villa de Navidad. This harbour was chosen because of its closeness to the gold mines as well as its favourable situation for commerce with the mainland "belonging to the Grand Khan".³ The later history of Villa de Navidad during which Columbus, as governor of Espanola undertook to exploit the islands' material and human possibilities as a crown monopoly shows the commercial intentions of the first and second voyages. Despite the vicissitudes the Island produced some 4,000,000 maravedís for Columbus himself and was producing gold for the crown, at the rate of 276 kilos per year (by 1501).⁴ Even

1. Ibid., op. cit., p.233.

2. Cecil Jane ed. Select Documents Illustrating the Four Voyages of Columbus, (London, 1930), p.16.

3. Ibid., p.13.

4. G. Cespedes del Castillo, "Las Indias en el reinado de los Reyes Catolicos", in Vicens Vives, Historia Social y Economica de Espana y America, 11, (Barcelona, 1957), p.532.

in 1494, just one year after the setting up of the colony some 11,250,000 maravedís in gold was sent to Spain.¹

Therefore, the Crown's acceptance of Columbus' proposals at the end of the war for Granada was not due to the scarcity of financial resources during the war, as Embid, Manzano Manzano, Morison and others have insisted, but rather because of the social and financial crisis in the final years of the war and the immediate post-war period. Columbus was sent out to establish a commerce in gold, spices and other common items of the fifteenth-century African trade from which the Crown could derive its quintas - another "extraordinary" revenue resorted to in much the same way and under many of the same circumstances as the Crusade and Hermanidad subsidy. These had been ways to escape from the difficult and dangerous situation presented by the Crown's financial weakness and the threat from Granada at the beginning of the reign. Now, when a situation of dangerous weakness occurred again the Crown's response was in the same dynamic, expansionist vein. The results of this daring initiative were to raise Spain to world power in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

1. G. Céspedes del Castillo, "Las Indias en el reinado de los Reyes Católicos", in Vicens Vives, Historia Social y Económica de España y América, 11, (Barcelona, 1957) p.531.

CONCLUSION

In the seventeen years 1475-1492 a vast change had taken place in both the external and internal form of the Spanish kingdoms. The greatly expanded and more efficient monarchy that was the eventual consequence of this change was to alter the map of Europe and the world in the next century. Externally, Castile had been joined to Aragon, Portugal and France defeated and the reconquista brought to a successful conclusion with the defeat of Granada. Internally, prompt and effective action on the part of two brilliant young sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella, had served to bring about an important increase in the power of the Crown.

The fortunes of the Spanish monarchy had sunk to a new low during the reign of Henry IV (1454-1474). Under Henry, the alienation of Crown land and revenues that began with the reign of Juan II continued and increased until the great nobles had absorbed most of the land in Castile and were even collecting royal taxes and diverting them to their own use. The nobles' growing economic strength was matched by an increase in their political ambitions. They had begun to think of themselves as a replacement for the monarchy itself. Led by Juan Pacheco, Marquis of Villena, the upper nobility began a series of wars whose real object was a permanent weakening of Crown authority. These wars were to culminate in the raising of Isabella to the throne despite Juana's superior claim. Ironically, the nobles' choice of Isabella as a figurehead ruler backfired - no sooner had she and Ferdinand ascended the throne than the chief of their own party was removed from his special position and exiled from Court. No single noble or combination of nobles was ever allowed

to take his place.

In the civil war that followed it appeared likely that the nobles would regain much of the lost ground. Just as in the days of Henry loyal nobles received valuable mercedes while rebels were accorded generous settlements if they would desert the Portuguese.

However, the young monarchs had very different ideas on the proper role of the monarch than those of their immediate predecessor. Realizing the inadvisability of any long-term dependence on the nobility they sought to base monarchical power on the support of the towns which had early given proof of their loyalty despite the blishments and threats of rebel nobles.

From 1476 to 1489 the alliance with the towns and the oligarchies that ran them continued without serious incident. In return for collection of war servicios, Hermandad subsidies and troops and supplies for the Granadine war the urban patriciate was allowed to escape war taxation and absorb common lands while complaints about its activities were largely ignored. The very existence of the formidable concentration of power brought to the Crown through its alliance with the towns was enough to reduce the overall political importance of the nobility. The nobles' heavy involvement in Granada both militarily and as holders of tenancies in the province after its conquest was to further reduce their trouble-making potential in the years to come.

However, there was a high political price to be paid on a local level for the alliance with the towns. The years 1489-1492 saw greatly increased pressure being put on the powers of the corregidor and his

officials by the urban oligarchy. By the 1490's corregidorial government had suffered grave damage and the supremacy of the urban patriciate and its organ the cabildo was assured.

The consequences of this rise to power by the urban patriciate were especially severe for the Jewish communities of Spain. In return for Crown protection these people had long furnished the monarchy with a docile class of administrators, doctors, tradesmen and artisans. Crown dependence on Jews to farm royal taxes was very heavy right through the fifteenth century. Under Ferdinand and Isabella one Jew - Rabbi Mayer - farmed the majority of the "ordinary" rents.

A dramatic change in this position began with the massive forced conversions that took place at the beginning of the century. These conversos soon mounted to the highest offices of the state. Even more significantly perhaps they began to form an important part of the city councils of Castile. In order to defend themselves from attack by Old Christians the converts took an uncompromisingly anti-semitic position. Their attacks against the Jews at first took the form of polemics against their religion. However in the last decades of the century, this hostility became translated into action on a local level that would lead to their expulsion. The Crown's heavy dependence on the converso Christian urban patriciate was too great to allow for drastic action to be taken against town councils that forced Jews to leave communities in which they had resided for many hundreds of years. Finally, the position of the Jews was so weakened and the Crown's efforts to help them so ineffectual and damaging to its authority that it seemed expedient to

order their total expulsion as converso polemicists had been demanding.

The danger to Crown authority that came from the widespread disobedience to its orders to protect the Jews was just one of the symptoms of crisis in the years 1489-1492. The favourable balances in the "ordinary" income accounts that ensured until then had altered until, by 1491, a substantial deficit was experienced. In the "extraordinary" accounts the monarchy faced the prospect of a considerable drop in revenue in the immediate future. The Crusade, which was not renewed until 1495, never yielded the revenues attained during the Granada war. A gap in the collection of Hermanedad subsidy and the outright loss of the castellanos del oro and other Jewish taxes plus the financial dislocations caused by the expulsion further complicated the Crown's financial difficulties.

In addition, the Crown could not anticipate a very substantial reduction in defense expenditure despite the end of the Grenadine conflict. The restive state of the conquered Moorish population would necessitate substantial garrisons for fortresses within the Kingdom for some time to come. Furthermore, the conquest of Granada added a considerable stretch of vulnerable coast to Castile. A fleet would have to be maintained to guard against the incursions of Moors from Africa. At the same time there was fear of a recrudescence of private wars among the Andalusian nobility. The example of Vizcaya in 1491 had already shown how damaging this kind of thing could be to Crown prestige. The dramatic reversal of policy that produced the first Columbian expedition was the result of this financial and political crisis. It

was the characteristic response of these dynamic monarchs to look for a way to cope with a crisis not by retrenchment but by expansion. The expedition was seen as a way of opening up yet another "extraordinary" income account through the income from quintas that would come if an extensive commerce in spices and other African and Asian commodities was opened up. This "extraordinary" account would, furthermore, have the advantage of being without political strings and entirely under the control of the monarchy. The policy was to have a vast, if belated success and the deluge of gold and silver that resulted from it was to have the most profound effects on the European economy as a whole. Spain herself was to be greatly aided in becoming the first nation of Europe in the sixteenth century while she with her overseas possessions was to be the model for the great colonial Empires of the Early Modern Period.

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